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STATE OF ILLINOIS
CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
COUNTY OF McLEAN

JOINT MEETING
LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE,
and
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

ORIGINAL

HEARING

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS of the hearing taken at the
Government Center, Room 400, 115 East Washington
Street, Bloomington, Illinois, on February 25, 2006,
at 5:00 p.m., before Fran Anderson, CSR, License No.
084-002930.

PRESENT:

- George Gordon, Chairman
Land Use and Development Committee
- Duffy Bass, Chairman
Transportation Committee
- Brian Hug, Civil Assistant State's Attorney
- John M. Zeunik, County Administrator

1 CHAIRMAN BASS: Good evening, ladies and
2 gentlemen. My name is Duffy Bass; I'm with the
3 Transportation Committee. This gentleman here is
4 with the Land Use, and he'll introduce people on
5 his committee, and I'll do the same. George, if
6 you would.

7 CHAIRMAN GORDON: Thank you, Duffy. My
8 name is George Gordon; I chair the Land Use and
9 Development Committee. Let me introduce the
10 other members or ask them to introduce
11 themselves. Members of the Land Use and
12 Development Committee, Terry Baggett, Don
13 Cavalini, and Committee Vice Chair Paul
14 Segobiano. Other members may arrive as we're
15 moving ahead.

16 Thank you, Duffy.

17 CHAIRMAN BASS: As the Chairman of the
18 Transportation Committee, I'd like to introduce
19 our people, and they are, one absentee with the
20 flu, Mrs. Sandra O'Connor, Terry Baggett, Don
21 Cavalini, Stan Hoselton, and Rick Dean -- did
22 Rick get here? He got bogged down out in the
23 cornfield, I think.

24 Well, this meeting, I think, will be a

1 valuable tool for all of us because we can get in
2 this room and, hopefully, everybody can go away
3 understanding where all of us are coming from.
4 I'm going to kick the lid off here by introducing
5 this gentleman right here to my right, John
6 Zeunik. He's Administrator for the County
7 Board.

8 MR. ZEUNIK: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN BASS: First of all, I'm going
10 to call upon Jack Mitchell. He's our County
11 Engineer, and he's going to fill us in with some
12 background, some history, and kind of bring us up
13 to date, if you will.

14 MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Duffy. I'm
15 going to give a brief history of the east side
16 highway, what its status is now. The 1994 McLean
17 County comprehensive plan showed a corridor right
18 in this area that is about the same as what was
19 studied in 2002. The plan also shows the
20 Mitsubishi Motorway as it extends from Route 9
21 down to Shirley.

22 In February of 1997 McLean County
23 amended the 1994 comprehensive plan to show the
24 Mitsubishi Motorway from Route 9 down to 55, and

1 at the same time that alignment prohibited the
2 construction of any buildings in the
3 right-of-way. This alignment study that was done
4 was commissioned by the Regional Planning
5 Commission, the County, City of Bloomington, and
6 Town of Normal, was done by Hanson Engineering.
7 Currently, the City of Bloomington has three
8 developments that are already incorporating into
9 Mitsubishi Motorway, and they are designing about
10 a mile of it, as I understand, to be built in
11 2007.

12 In August of 2000 McLean County adopted
13 our new comprehensive plan. This roadway plan
14 again showed the corridor for the east side
15 highway and again showed the Mitsubishi
16 Motorway. In July of 2002 we received a
17 feasibility study from Bernardin and
18 Lockmueller. That study again was commissioned
19 by the same group as previously. This plan
20 looked at a three-mile wide corridor from Towanda
21 Barnes east, starting right there and coming east
22 three miles, went from 55 down to 74.

23 The six corridors that were evaluated,
24 the consultant then recommended Alternate C,

1 starts here and goes around like that, from 55
2 again down to 74. They recommended that it
3 should be built to an interstate standard. They
4 had an approximate cost estimate of
5 \$250,000,000.

6 There were three public hearings held
7 during that time frame during the study now
8 recommended Alternate C as shown here. According
9 to -- this is the remarks from the consultant, it
10 has the best access to the growing areas, it's
11 comparable to interstate and Veterans Parkway,
12 diversion on another alternate, and it had a
13 relocation of part of I-55 near Towanda to get
14 the interchange in.

15 The advantages of this alignment were
16 the best access to major employment centers and
17 the airport, greatest relief to the congested
18 segments of Veterans Parkway, most adjacent to
19 future growth areas. There were no floodplain or
20 stream crossings, minimal wetlands, and the
21 farmland in most of that area is undergoing urban
22 conversion. The disadvantage was the relocation
23 of I-55.

24 The Transportation Committee recommended

1 to accept and sent the feasibility study to the
2 County Board in April of 2003. The City of
3 Bloomington didn't act at that time, and so then
4 the Transportation Committee tabled the
5 feasibility study before it went to the County
6 Board.

7 To give you an idea of the current
8 traffic, this is the 2004 traffic map from IDOT,
9 shows 47,000 cars a day here on Veterans Parkway
10 right now. This is about a one-third increase in
11 the previous ten years. Towanda Barnes going
12 through here, right in here there's about 13,000
13 thousand cars a day on it. The traffic on
14 Towanda Barnes in various segments has increased
15 from two to three times over that same ten-year
16 period from 1990 to 2000.

17 In May 2004 the City of Bloomington,
18 Town of Normal, McLean County passed a joint
19 resolution for further study of the east and
20 south side highway. Again, this would be the
21 corridor. The study would extend over to 51 as
22 well. We asked our representatives for
23 \$10,000,000 to do the complete phase one
24 engineering for this study in the last federal

1 highway bill. We received 800,000 of what's
2 called high priority program funds.

3 The local engineers meet with IDOT, and
4 we felt that we could do an alignment study for a
5 million dollars that would be available. We
6 wouldn't have the funds to do the whole phase one
7 study that will need to be done. Subsequently,
8 we've asked for another 150,000 from IDOT
9 Illinois Tomorrow grant money.

10 Recently, I'm told the City of
11 Bloomington has included the corridor in their
12 comp plan, and Normal has started working on
13 their comprehensive plan. We now -- and we
14 being, again, the engineers and regional planning
15 for the area -- are working on a request for
16 proposals to do the alignment study. We want to
17 have a consultant on board when the money is
18 released.

19 Unfortunately, the release of that money
20 is up to IDOT, and the holdup has been waiting
21 for appropriation authority, that is, the
22 Legislature has is to appropriate all the funds
23 that IDOT spends, and they didn't have funds for
24 that in 2006. So we've looked into a

1 supplemental appropriation. We may have to wait
2 until July 1, which is the start of the State's
3 fiscal year 2007, or we may receive partial
4 funding out of fiscal year 2006 state money.

5 When we get into the alignment study,
6 there will be public meetings. The number of
7 them will be determined after we select a
8 consultant; whether that will be three, which we
9 had the last time, or what number, I don't really
10 know. The alignment study, as it's done, will
11 consider other alignments, both in and out of the
12 corridor. It will consider the ones that were
13 all done in the feasibility study. They will try
14 to find alignment missing as many houses as they
15 can.

16 The study has to determine the
17 approximate right-of-way that's needed. Varying
18 with terrain and the final plans, it's probably
19 in the neighborhood of 300 feet wide right-of-way
20 that we're going to need. That takes in about
21 960 acres total, including the interchanges,
22 relocation of Route 55.

23 The -- if you look at the last ten
24 years -- not the last ten years -- from 1990 to

1 2000, this urban area has grown 6,239 acres.
2 Kind of puts the 960 acres in perspective. We're
3 going to need about a sixth of that. The study
4 is going to have to be done according to all
5 federal and state guidelines, regulations. The
6 type of facility will be revisited and finalized
7 as to whether it would be an interstate as was in
8 the original feasibility study.

9 The corridor will also be studied from
10 here on over to 51 to allow better access from
11 the south, again up to our shopping areas up to
12 State Farm, Country Companies, other employers in
13 the area, and up to the airport. There is
14 considerable traffic from the south wanting to
15 get to our airport. Access will be helped out,
16 Ireland Grove to the new Cornerstone Christian
17 Church out there. The study itself probably
18 takes in the neighborhood of sixteen to eighteen
19 months to complete, once we get to the starting
20 point.

21 There's a proposed intergovernmental
22 agreement that would call for sharing the cost of
23 the -- the local cost of the study in thirds
24 between Bloomington and Normal and the County.

1 That money will probably be in the neighborhood
2 of seventy to a hundred thousand dollars. The
3 amendment to the comprehensive plan calls for a
4 2,500 foot wide corridor, which is what we're
5 showing right here, and then also not allowing
6 any construction of any buildings in that
7 corridor. Realize that the 2,500 foot corridor
8 is considerably less than the mile and a half
9 wide corridor that's in our current plan.

10 Why do we need an east and south side
11 highway? Well, the feasibility study that was
12 done says in the 20-year traffic forecast
13 Veterans Parkway is going to be too congested,
14 there's going to be too much traffic on Towanda
15 Barnes. This will -- the east side highway will
16 relieve that and will provide good access; there
17 will be multiple interchanges to allow interstate
18 access to the east side of down. If we don't
19 protect this alignment in the near future, I
20 think we all realize it's going to be lost.
21 Development has already skipped it. So it's --
22 time is critical.

23 I've been asked why not take this
24 corridor farther east? Well, the main reason, as

1 was called out in the feasibility study, is all
2 the creeks, the wetlands, all the subdivisions.
3 You've got Towanda at the north, Downs on the
4 south. It's hard to get anything in there until
5 you get at least three miles out. By the time
6 you get three miles out, you've lost your
7 access. It's truly become a bypass. People
8 aren't going to go that extra distance to come
9 back into town. You'll end up with strip
10 development all along the access roads with the
11 interchanges so that's not going to be a good
12 situation.

13 That's all I have.

14 CHAIRMAN BASS: Thank you, Mr.
15 Mitchell. Now I'm going to call upon Mr. Phillip
16 Dick. Mr. Dick is director of Building and
17 Zoning here in the county. Have at it, Mr.
18 Dick.

19 MR. DICK: Thank you, Mr. Bass. This is
20 the big picture of McLean County that we need to
21 look at. It's not just about the east side, east
22 side bypass. It's not a bypass, if what we want
23 to build is a bypass, because we have this
24 bypass. I-55 is truly a bypass of the

1 community. If you look at the big picture, you
2 see how fortunate we are to have the interstates
3 coming in from Peoria; from the north, I-39; from
4 the southwest, I-55; from the south, 51; and then
5 I-74 from the Champaign area.

6 All of these arteries are instrumental
7 in bringing people to operate in and from the
8 urban area, and this urban area is essentially
9 the engine that drives this community. With this
10 facility that we have already, it's the main
11 reason many of us have jobs in the community, the
12 main reason for growth in the community, and the
13 main reason people will commute from Pontiac,
14 Chenoa, areas in between, from Minonk, El Paso,
15 and areas in between, from Washington, Eureka,
16 East Peoria, and areas in between, from Lincoln
17 and Clinton and Mahomet and Farmer City and all
18 areas in between, and why you may be able to live
19 in Bloomington and provide sales and other
20 services to areas outside the community. Again,
21 this is an urban area that is driving -- is the
22 engine that's driving the economy here, and it
23 has significant advantages that need to be
24 upgraded.

1 I used to be a truck driver, and my
2 handle was the Hooterville Kid because I was from
3 Bloomington, Illinois. I thought that it was
4 kind of like Hooterville. Well, it's not
5 Hooterville anymore, and it's come a long ways.
6 And if you will look at the whole picture you
7 will see that an access from this side of the
8 community to the developing area is happening,
9 and the county zoning at this time still
10 preserves this area and why there's no
11 development in it.

12 The only development that is encroaching
13 upon it is the community development of
14 Bloomington and Normal, essentially, and that's
15 why you have this little development here that's
16 close to being -- well, it's been approved, and
17 you have development over here that's been
18 approved, and you have development over here
19 that's been approved, and here. And then you
20 have some just north of the Barnes Elevator that
21 is likely to be approved very shortly.

22 The county has very restrictive
23 regulations as far as developing in the ag
24 district. It has done a wonderful job in curbing

1 sprawl in our community. This little map is
2 essentially a zoning map with things enhanced to
3 it. The wide area is the agriculture zoning
4 district. These brown areas are residential
5 zones, and this red area over here is, like,
6 commercial, and the blue is manufacturing
7 districts.

8 The urban area, then, this is
9 Bloomington, which is green, and Normal, which is
10 also green. And then you have the other
11 communities, like Downs here is gray, and you
12 have Hudson up here, which is gray, and Towanda,
13 which is gray. But the white area, which is most
14 of the county, is residential development.

15 Commercial development is extremely
16 restricted. You could put a farmhouse on that
17 property for a farmer or a farm owner could build
18 a dwelling on it, and they could conceivably
19 build a machine shed for their farm on it. But
20 they essentially can't do development on it until
21 it's rezoned. And with our comprehensive plan
22 having shown a corridor here for possible
23 transportation facilities since 1994, it's not
24 likely that that property could be rezoned. In

1 order to be rezoned in the County, it has to be
2 consistent with our comprehensive plan.

3 But the white area is the area that's
4 significant -- well, we'll show that zoning map
5 later. This is the boundary of the City of
6 Bloomington-Normal or the urban areas in 1970.
7 And notice how it's not even past I-55 and it's
8 barely past Veterans Parkway, which is here, and
9 it's very little north of I-55. This is the size
10 of the community back in 1970, the urban area.

11 In 1980 you see that it's kind of gone
12 up here a little bit north here where Ironwood is
13 and a little bit to the southwest and definitely
14 more here on Veterans Parkway, and this has
15 increased by 2,600 acres. This is 2,600 acres
16 larger than it was in 1970. And then notice how
17 it's encroaching this area and then the
18 superimposed bypass.

19 And in 1990 notice how we've gone over
20 to Mitsubishi Motorway and more up here and
21 definitely more over here. And in 1990, now
22 we've gone upwards of 4,384 acres from 1980. And
23 in 2000, now notice how even more over here along
24 Mitsubishi in this area and this area, and now

1 we're up to Towanda Barnes and pushing.

2 Now, this increases by 6,000 acres, as
3 Mr. Mitchell mentioned earlier. But again, we
4 still don't have any development in this
5 corridor, and then now we have 2005 and now we
6 have this development here. It's jumped a
7 corridor, and this is in the neighborhood of
8 another 2,100 acres since in the previous five
9 years.

10 So as you see how this is being
11 developed, you'll see that from '70 to '80 we had
12 a 22.7 percent increase in acreage, and from '80
13 to '90 a 30 percent increase in the acreage of
14 the urban area, and 1990 to 2000 33 percent
15 increase, and from 2000 to 2005, which is only
16 five years, 8.6 percent increase. As you can
17 see, the amount of acreage for a final alignment
18 is 960 acres, and this is the big picture.

19 Now, the agricultural zoning, again,
20 will restrict development in this until the city
21 has annexed it. There's not really a requirement
22 from the zoning from the county perspective for
23 the moratorium, but it gives a better perspective
24 and intergovernmental cooperation with the cities

1 if there is an intergovernmental cooperation or a
2 moratorium.

3 Now, this is the whole zoning map of the
4 county. So to give you an understanding of how
5 farmland preservation works, it's this whole
6 white area that we're concerned with, not just
7 the little bit of white area you saw over here.
8 And given what you saw in the previous
9 development area, I don't think that within the
10 next few years that it will be an issue of
11 farmland preservation, because that land will be
12 too valuable to farm. Land in those areas, the
13 city, as it becomes developed, is worth in the
14 neighborhood of thirty to fifty thousand dollars
15 an acre, and you're not going to be farming that;
16 at least the existing generation probably won't.
17 Well, they probably will, but if it's sold their
18 children will sell it for development, because
19 that's what will be the highest and best use, and
20 they'll be able to get more acreage elsewhere.

21 Now, again, this is the corridor, and
22 it's currently -- and there's a few houses here.
23 There's still -- it's mainly in crop production
24 and would be -- there would be a three or four

1 hundred foot strip of land that you go through
2 here without having to buy much developed
3 property at all.

4 McLean County has 1,194 square miles,
5 and this is the county. These are the farms in
6 McLean County, and all this land is being taxed
7 as farms. There's these two here that are owned
8 by the University of Illinois (sic), and those
9 are still farms and they're farmed by tenant
10 farmers so they're paying taxes as farms, too.
11 This is the cropland in McLean County.

12 Eighty-two percent of the total land in County
13 has crops on it, and these white areas here are
14 the lakes, Lake Evergreen and Lake Bloomington
15 and the Mackinaw and Dawson Lake and Funk's
16 Grove.

17 There are wooded areas, too, that aren't
18 included in this. And the filter strips, they
19 aren't really included in the crop production,
20 either, nor are the streams. Now, this is the
21 acreage of the corridor; it's 4,000 acres. Of
22 this, 3,600 acres is cropland, and once an
23 alignment study is done it would only require
24 about 960 acres.

1 Again, this is the big picture, and if
2 we're concerned about preserving farm ground, we
3 would have the corridor closer in. If we were
4 concerned about using this facility to access and
5 enhance the urban area, we would have it closer
6 in. If we want to limit its impact on these
7 streams, we will have it closer in. I encourage
8 you to take a look at the bigger picture, and I
9 would argue that this will not be a significant
10 loss of farm ground, that this area, by the time
11 it is built, will be mostly developable land and
12 not farm ground because it will be too valuable.

13 CHAIRMAN BASS: Thank you, Mr. Dick.
14 And now the Assistant State's Attorney, Mr. Brian
15 Hug, is going to come forward and give us some
16 information about moratoriums and takings, et
17 cetera, et cetera.

18 MR. HUG: For the Committee, I've been
19 asked to address three things, actually, for each
20 committee. The Land Use Committee had the
21 resolution regarding the change in the
22 comprehensive plan before it. The Transportation
23 Committee had an intergovernmental agreement with
24 the city and the town before it.

1 Starting with the intergovernmental
2 agreement, the Transportation Committee was asked
3 to do two things. One was to approve the
4 intergovernmental agreement, and that agreement
5 did split the cost of the study. We're just
6 talking about the study now. We're not talking
7 about building anything; we're just talking about
8 the study. The agreement explained there was
9 federal money and then how the costs would be
10 split evenly between the three government
11 agencies, the City of Bloomington, Town of
12 Normal, and County of McLean.

13 The agreement also required the three
14 government agencies to restrict building in the
15 corridor. For most people, that's considered a
16 moratorium. The corridor currently is almost
17 completely outside the city and the town. There
18 is actually a strip of the corridor that is on
19 Ireland Grove Road that crosses city lines, but
20 basically there is no -- there is not enough room
21 there to build.

22 So the real impact is the county would
23 be restricting building. Then we would also be
24 asking the city and the town not to allow in

1 their annexation agreements, or their
2 preannexation agreements, not to allow building
3 in this corridor. Basically, we are going to
4 give time for the study to determine where that
5 layout is.

6 The agreement also addressed other
7 issues, such as repair and maintenance, what
8 happens to somebody's house if there's damage to
9 it. Yes, you can repair your house; yes, you can
10 maintain your house. It also was -- addressed
11 hardships, what if a person has extreme
12 hardships. Each of the government agencies will
13 be able to deal with those in their -- at their
14 agency level or their government level without
15 totally blocking somebody from dealing with the
16 personal hardships on their property.

17 The resolution presented to the Land Use
18 Committee asked you to approve the change in
19 comprehensive plan, which means to approve a
20 reduction in the size of the corridor that was
21 approved previously. That resolution also asks
22 that you enact the building restrictions that we
23 would agree to under the intergovernmental
24 agreement. That was what was being asked of each

1 of the committees, that's what you asked to be
2 put on hold until you held this public meeting.

3 The next issue which I've been asked to
4 address is the public takings issue. Pursuant to
5 the Fifth Amendment of the United States
6 Constitution, Section 12, Article 1 of the
7 Illinois State Constitution, private property may
8 not be taken without just compensation. That
9 doesn't mean it cannot be taken, it can be taken,
10 but it may not be taken without just
11 compensation.

12 The question is do you have a taking;
13 when does a taking occur. A taking can occur
14 through physical invasion, physical occupation of
15 the property. Oftentimes, we see that situation
16 when a government entity actually obtains road
17 pavement, a place where we can lay our pavement,
18 our right-of-way; when we actually obtain it,
19 when we actually occupy it, when we own it,
20 that's an easy taking to understand.

21 One of the other types of takings that
22 is very common that people expect or understand
23 is a regulatory taking; when have the regulations
24 gone so far as to take the property. Most people

1 feel like any use, any constraint on my property
2 is a taking.

3 That is not true. In fact, the Supreme
4 Court has clearly approved zoning. All the
5 agencies involved, the county, the city, and town
6 all have zoning regulations. That is not a
7 taking. Specifically, the Supreme Court has said
8 that the taking must take the economic value of
9 the property, not just a little bit, essentially
10 all the economic value. So a taking does not
11 occur just because you've taken some of the
12 economic value.

13 The property here that is subject to the
14 corridor is, in most part, agricultural
15 property. It is zoned agriculture. A moratorium
16 or a restriction on building does not take away
17 the right to farm that property while the
18 moratorium is in existence. It is not a taking
19 to put a moratorium on the property to restrict
20 building. In fact, the Supreme Court in recent
21 years has specifically addressed takings for
22 planning purposes, or actually moratoriums for
23 planning purposes.

24 In what's called the Lake Tahoe case

1 there was a dispute about whether or not a
2 moratorium had prohibited development on the
3 property around Lake Tahoe, whether that was a
4 taking or not. The Supreme Court decided that it
5 was not taking to place a moratorium on building
6 while a planning process was occurring. So,
7 specifically, while the moratorium's in place the
8 main decision on where this road goes is not a
9 taking.

10 If there is a taking, when you get to
11 the point of making an alignment and going out
12 and buying right-of-way way or deciding where to
13 acquire right-of-way, then as a government agency
14 you will be conducting a taking. You will either
15 pay market price -- you'll actually pay the
16 market price whether you do it by negotiation or
17 you will do it through the court system, but you
18 will pay market price for that land.

19 CHAIRMAN BASS: Thank you, Mr. Hug. I
20 want to take just a minute here to identify you
21 folks and have them raise their hand, if they
22 would. Present by the City of Bloomington and
23 Town of Normal, from the City of Bloomington, Mr.
24 Tom Hamilton, who is sitting here with his back

1 to most of us, but he did wave his hand, and Mr.
2 Doug Grovesteen. From the Town of Normal, Mark
3 Peterson --

4 MR. GROVESTEEEN: He's not here.

5 CHAIRMAN BASS: He's not here. Mr. Mike
6 Hall and Mr. Gene Brown. Thank you.

7 I guess we have a sign-in sheet, John.
8 Did it come in? We'll filibuster here a minute
9 because we're going to bring this list of people
10 that want to be heard. And may I say that this
11 is just for information. All of this is for
12 information; no voting, nothing in finality. We
13 hope that in this day and age we have to
14 understand that change is inevitable, and we want
15 to do it in the best interests of everybody
16 honestly and so on.

17 Did someone from the Town of Normal, did
18 you want to say anything?

19 MR. HALL: We have prepared some
20 statements.

21 CHAIRMAN BASS: Tom?

22 MR. HAMILTON: Thank you, Duffy.

23 Basically, what I've been asked to do is to give
24 everyone an update as to where the City of

1 Bloomington is today regarding the corridor
2 issue. This past September the City of
3 Bloomington adopted its revised comprehensive
4 plan. The comprehensive plan that was approved
5 by the City Council includes the corridor as you
6 see it on this map.

7 Prior to that adoption by the City
8 Council there were several months of public
9 hearings before the Bloomington Planning
10 Commission. There was a work session last June
11 between the City Council and the Bloomington
12 Planning Commission to discuss this issue. When
13 the public hearing process came to a close in
14 August or early September, the Bloomington
15 Planning Commission passed on its recommendation
16 to adopt the comprehensive plan without showing
17 the corridor on the transportation map.

18 The City Council, when it had its City
19 Council meeting, heard testimony from folks, read
20 through the record that was provided by the
21 Bloomington Planning Commission, they decided to
22 show the corridor as it is seen here as part of
23 our comprehensive plan. That's how it was
24 adopted and that's how it was published, and

1 that's how it's available today.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN BASS: Sir, did you care to
4 speak?

5 MR. GROVESTEEEN: I don't think I need to
6 say anything.

7 CHAIRMAN BASS: Town of Normal. Mr.
8 Hall?

9 MR. HALL: Thank you, Chairman Bass.
10 City Manager Mark Peterson apologizes that he
11 can't make it this evening. He is currently in
12 Washington, D.C. to again thump for funds for
13 transportation facilities in McLean County, so
14 we -- I wish him luck on that.

15 The statements here are pretty much
16 similar to the City of Bloomington but not quite
17 as far advanced. The town has recognized the
18 need for continued planning for an east side
19 highway, as demonstrated by the actions that we
20 have previously taken and also actions to be
21 considered very soon.

22 On May 3rd of 2004 the Council did adopt
23 that joint resolution together with the City of
24 Bloomington and the County Board supporting

1 further study of a highway on the east and south
2 sides of the urban area with the condition that
3 this continued study include but not necessarily
4 be limited to all of the alternative alignments
5 that were reported in the feasibility study dated
6 2002.

7 The resolution also instructs the local
8 transportation officials to pursue state and
9 federal funding to finance this study. Federal
10 funding, like Engineer Mitchell had indicated
11 earlier, thorough funding in the amount of about
12 \$880,000 was earmarked in last year's federal
13 highway bill, and of course that is a result of
14 local officials soliciting for those funds.

15 In addition to that activity, the town,
16 and this was even before the 2002 feasibility
17 study, in 2001 the Town Council approved an
18 inclusion of an east side regional highway in an
19 amendment to its 1996 comprehensive plan. So it
20 was also shown, documented that the corridor, as
21 it was shown in planning documents at the time,
22 was on the town's comprehensive plan.

23 The town's current proposed update to
24 its comprehensive plan, which is due

1 consideration and approval this spring, addresses
2 the east side highway, encouraging the further
3 study, and that the proposed new highway
4 alignment take into consideration the town's
5 planned street network and land uses in this
6 area.

7 In reinforcing some of the advantages
8 associated with the highway corridor as currently
9 proposed, we feel that it should provide the best
10 and most direct regional access from the
11 interstate highway system to the major east side
12 employment centers and the airport, that we
13 provide the greatest traffic relief to the most
14 congested segments of Veterans Parkway and other
15 local arterial highway without creating another
16 Veterans Parkway-like highway by limiting access
17 to local arterial streets, and to minimize its
18 impact on floodplains and wetlands, the number of
19 stream crossings and other adverse impacts on the
20 environment and natural resources of the area,
21 and be limited to that area already undergoing
22 urban development to minimize the amount of
23 farmland disturbed.

24 And in addition to myself there are two

1 other staff members here this evening with me,
2 City Engineer Gene Brown and also City Planner
3 Marcy Davidson, who is out there someplace --
4 there she is -- in which case any questions of us
5 are asked at any point in this meeting we'd be
6 happy to answer.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN BASS: Chairman Gordon wants to
9 say a couple of things. I think he has a couple
10 of latecomers that got in, and he'd like to
11 introduce those folks.

12 CHAIRMAN GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Bass.
13 Cathy Ahart, a member of the Land Use and
14 Development Committee, arrived after the
15 presentations had begun, and I want to welcome
16 Cathy and have Cathy raise her hand so the people
17 know who she is. And seated next to her, if I
18 may, Chairman Bass, a member of the
19 Transportation Committee, Rick Dean, is also
20 seated at the table at this time.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BASS: Folks, we have quite a
23 few people who have signed up to say a few
24 words. There is no decision-making here today.

1 This is informational, and I hope we can all go
2 away with a little bit of a better understanding
3 about what we are facing. There's a lot of
4 things that have to be done; there's a lot of
5 items that have to be covered because of federal
6 and because of state and because of local edicts
7 and so on.

8 So without any further time that I'm
9 going to give I want to start in because we do
10 have quite a few people that want to say
11 something. And if it comes your turn and someone
12 has already said all the things that you were
13 going to say, you can just let us know and we'll
14 skip on down to the next person.

15 We're going to limit this, you can't get
16 up here, because I have -- I have a date
17 (laughter), and I'd say three to four minutes, if
18 you would, because we do have a lot of people
19 here, and Jack Mitchell took too much time in the
20 first place (laughter.)

21 Mr. John Zeunik, do you want to call
22 them up, John?

23 MR. ZEUNIK: Be happy to. The first
24 individual who signed up, name is George Wells,

1 if you would come forward, please. Mr. Wells,
2 we'd ask you to come to the podium and use the
3 microphone. We would also ask for the benefit of
4 the court reporter that you would please state
5 your name and your address, and if necessary, if
6 you could also spell your name for the benefit of
7 the court reporter, that would be great.

8 MR. WELLS: George G. Wells.
9 Traditional spelling of George and Wells. It
10 concerns me when I hear someone say land becomes
11 too valuable for farming. We're blessed with
12 some of the richest, agriculturally productive
13 land in the world, and Bloomington-Normal, in my
14 opinion, is a farm town. We are based on an
15 agricultural system, and if the agricultural
16 system would collapse I'm not sure what would be
17 left in Bloomington-Normal. We might have State
18 Farm and County Companies and Mitsubishi, but we
19 would lose -- I don't know what the economic
20 contribution of the farmland is to this
21 community, but it seems to me that this committee
22 ought to be working in every way possible to
23 conserve that valuable farmland that we have, and
24 that isn't what I've heard today.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN BASS: Next, John, please.

3 MR. ZEUNIK: Next on the list is Denise
4 Wilson.

5 MS. WILSON: Denise Wilson, I think you
6 can spell that, and I live in Bloomington.
7 Actually, I'm speaking on behalf of my mother,
8 whose home is located in the middle of the
9 corridor on 150. In fact, according to the plan,
10 cars would be coming through her living room.
11 She lives in the home that my father built
12 forty-five years ago.

13 I live in Bloomington, and I can
14 appreciate what the group here is looking at
15 because I drive on Veterans Parkway every day,
16 and it truly is a parkway. I can also appreciate
17 the time, effort, and money used by this group so
18 far on the plans that you described.

19 However, I see two fundamental
20 problems. One is the needless taking of homes
21 with the currently proposed corridor. Second,
22 the corridor shown does not demonstrate the
23 forethought regarding the future growth. I know
24 you've looked at it over the years; however, when

1 you see the urban growth patterns, when it was
2 originally planned in the 1970s, there was plenty
3 of room. There's no longer plenty of room. It
4 needs to go farther east.

5 If this is a temporary fix, then extend
6 out Towanda Barnes over to 74. However, if
7 you're really dealing with future growth, the
8 obvious solution would be to move the entire
9 corridor much farther towards Downs. You've
10 noted concerns that people won't go an extra
11 three miles to gain access.

12 Personally, if you have driven on
13 Veterans Parkway, if you want to avoid that mess,
14 three miles is nothing. If people want to get
15 somewhere, they're going to go that extra three
16 miles. Also, your own urban growth chart shows
17 that the current corridor is no longer
18 appropriate and it needs to be moved much farther
19 east.

20 You've also talked about takings and
21 about paying market price of affected
22 properties. That doesn't compensate for the
23 disruption of homes and lives involved in the
24 proposed corridor. I ask that each of you on the

1 committee take into consideration what your plans
2 would be for the corridor if your homes were
3 sitting in the corridor.

4 MR. ZEUNIK: Next is Ida Williams.

5 DENISE WILLIAMS: I was speaking for
6 her.

7 MR. ZEUNIK: All right. Next is Mike
8 Pool.

9 MR. POOL: My name is Mike Pool. I live
10 at 20216 East 1400 North Road, which is Route 9,
11 just east of the proposed corridor. I understand
12 a lot of work has gone into this, but some of --
13 the question that I continue to come back to is,
14 I remember last week or a couple weeks ago when
15 there was an article in the paper about this
16 meeting and the meeting prior to this, and it was
17 mentioned and it's been mentioned time and time
18 again that the proposed corridor is coming down
19 an existing right-of-way. And it was clear to
20 see on this map again that there is very little
21 existing right-of-way where this is actually
22 going.

23 And I just -- I think it's important
24 that if we are going to continue to go towards

1 this that we talk about this in the right way and
2 that there is no right-of-way, that you're going
3 to have to create right-of-way all the way across
4 there. One mile of that 2000, I think, currently
5 exists as a dirt road, and that's about as much
6 right-of-way as there is on the 2000 road portion
7 of the plan.

8 So I think it's important, as the
9 various committees look at this and talk about
10 this and we see things in the paper and we see
11 these reports, that we mention that there is no
12 existing -- this entire road is going to take
13 farmland. It's not going to be taking up or
14 using any existing right-of-ways that I can tell
15 on that map.

16 And the other thing that I wanted to
17 mention, it's pretty obvious by looking at the
18 map, compared to where it was a year or so ago,
19 that there's already been changes, and you can
20 see that there's been changes to that proposed
21 corridor because of development that's already
22 going to happen on Ireland Grove.

23 If you look at the original proposed
24 land compared to where it's at, it's already had

1 a jog to the west now to avoid that particular
2 subdivision. Again, I think it's important if
3 we're going to do this to get the road -- to get
4 that spot marked out, but it's also important to
5 make sure and state it correctly, because there
6 is no right-of-way.

7 Thank you.

8 SPECTATOR: Can we have the map up while
9 these people speak so we can look at the map?
10 I'm talking about the one that was projected on
11 the screen.

12 (Whereupon a brief recess was taken
13 while a map was brought in the room.)

14 SPECTATOR: I'm talking about the one
15 that was projected on the screen.

16 MR. MITCHELL: This is the same one that
17 was projected on the screen. He's already
18 unhooked everything, but he'll set it up.

19 MR. ZEUNIK: The next speaker on our
20 list is Mr. Tim Bittner.

21 MR. BITTNER: My name is Tim Bittner. I
22 live at 19580 East 1300 North Road. My wife had
23 also requested to speak, and she has graciously
24 allowed allotted me her time (laughter.)

1 The city leaders of Bloomington-Normal
2 and McLean County are putting their councils and
3 the County Board under pressure to approve a
4 proposed corridor for the east side bypass.
5 Allow me to share with you a variety of reasons
6 why local governing bodies should not approve the
7 corridor for the proposed bypass. This is an
8 injustice to landowners and homeowners to rezone
9 their property just in case a bypass may be built
10 in ten to twenty years. This action leaves those
11 affected in financial limbo. My understanding is
12 that my farming operation would not be able to
13 add new structures or replace buildings damaged
14 beyond repair or storage facilities under the new
15 zoning freeze. If my home were damaged beyond
16 repair by a fire or a tornado, it could not be
17 replaced. And this is all land that I'm paying
18 taxes on, land that I own, and land that I
19 produce income off and pay taxes on that. Kind
20 of makes you wonder, doesn't it, all of this with
21 no certainty or guarantee that a road will ever
22 be built.

23 An east side bypass would create a
24 barrier around the cities and enclose them

1 forever, a permanent decision. The proposed
2 corridor is shortsighted in that current
3 development has already passed it on the east
4 side. The proposed corridor is too close to
5 Towanda Barnes. Veterans Parkway and Towanda
6 Barnes are over two miles apart; the proposed
7 corridor is only one-half mile from Towanda
8 Barnes.

9 Congressman Tim Johnson stated, in a
10 letter to my wife and I, I will not advocate the
11 use of federal dollars to begin construction of
12 an east side corridor, and yet potentially today
13 I could have a moratorium put on that property in
14 case they wanted to build down the road.

15 There is no guarantee of funding for
16 this bypass. The east side bypass and corridor
17 are based on a study over five years old. And
18 the reason I know that is I represented McLean
19 County Farm Bureau in the process of doing the
20 study, and I represented the agricultural
21 interest. So a lot has happened, a lot of
22 changes have occurred since the bypass study was
23 done.

24 It's been mentioned earlier, but I think

1 it's necessary to mention it again, the proposed
2 corridor does not use existing right-of-way as
3 claimed. Local Road 2000 does not exist south of
4 GE Road, and I think that's a very important
5 point. And I would appreciate it if we could not
6 be using that in the future.

7 McLean County Farm Bureau, who
8 represents the agricultural interests in McLean
9 County, has opposed the corridor, and I have a
10 letter to back that up. The Pantagraph has
11 stated that the bypass should not become a
12 barrier on the east side of Bloomington.
13 Confusion and many unanswered questions hang over
14 the proposed bypass and corridor.

15 The Bloomington Planning Commission,
16 after several months of hearing and study,
17 recommended the City Council not put the proposed
18 corridor on the city's comprehensive plan. The
19 mayor of Bloomington and the Bloomington City
20 Manager overruled that Planning Commission prior
21 to the council meeting, and that decision was
22 decided in one evening after months of dedicated
23 work by a Planning Commission. Sadly for all,
24 this was not the mayor and the city manager's

1 finest hour.

2 There are other options to help if we do
3 have future traffic concerns, and I'm saying this
4 to be positive and responsible as a citizen. It
5 will cost a lot less for Towanda Barnes to be
6 widened and improved from I-55 to Route 74 on the
7 south. There are existing roads farther east,
8 such as County Road 2400 East, if there is future
9 need for more transportation in this community,
10 and that is an existing road.

11 The new Eastlake development has a
12 north-south artery included in its plan, and that
13 artery will not have homes that access it. There
14 will be frontage roads. Simply require
15 subsequent developments to attach to this artery
16 east-west roads already exist, and this will form
17 a grid for future traffic needs.

18 In conclusion, a new study needs to be
19 completed before anything is done. Using old
20 information and studies to plan for the future is
21 clearly using poor judgment. Please don't be
22 pressured by a few individuals with personal
23 agendas. And I would like to commend all of you
24 for being here tonight and being part of local

1 government. I still believe in it, and I hope to
2 continue.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. ZEUNIK: The next speaker on the
6 list is Mr. Homer Bozarth.

7 MR. BOZARTH: Homer Bozarth, Route 1,
8 Box 101, Bloomington. I'd just like to say I'm
9 against it. And who on this committee represents
10 me as a homeowner out in that area?

11 MR. DEAN: What was the address, again?

12 MR. BOZARTH: Route 1, Bloomington.

13 MR. DEAN: Which side are you on, of 9?

14 MR. BOZARTH: South.

15 MR. DEAN: That could very easily be me,
16 depending on how far out you are.

17 MR. BOZARTH: Thank you. I'll talk to
18 you later (laughter).

19 MR. ZEUNIK: The next speaker is Mr.
20 Scott Romine.

21 MR. ROMINE: I didn't request to speak.

22 MR. ZEUNIK: Okay. Next is Mr. Jerry
23 Hayden.

24 MR. HAYDEN: Tim Bittner basically said

1 what I had to say.

2 MR. ZEUNIK: Next is Mr. Matt Carroll.

3 MR. CARROLL: Hi, I am Matt Carroll. I
4 live at 1625 Ensign Drive in Normal. That's over
5 by Parkside Junior High, so you can picture in
6 your mind where I live at. I don't own any
7 property out there, I don't have a farm or any
8 buildings or anything out there, but I'm opposed
9 to building a freeway-style road out there for
10 two main reasons.

11 One, it will accelerate the growth of
12 the community out that way. You can see the
13 community is growing out there by the things that
14 were mentioned tonight, but building a freeway
15 out with freeway exits will draw a lot of traffic
16 off of the freeways. We'll have hotels,
17 restaurants, gas stations, and what not and a lot
18 of growth out there and consuming a lot more
19 farmland than what's normally going to be
20 consumed already.

21 We heard tonight about how this farmland
22 right out there now is just as good as gone.
23 Well, if that freeway is built out there, it will
24 be consumed at even a faster rate than what's

1 happening now. And the second reason for not
2 wanting a freeway out there now is the people who
3 lose that property, they're not going to get paid
4 for, really, a good value. They'll get paid the
5 market at the time it's sold.

6 But when the property is developed
7 around those exit ramps, a few select people will
8 make a lot of money building those businesses
9 there, and they will be getting rich. But the
10 people who lose their property won't get part of
11 that. They'll just get paid the market value and
12 be on their way.

13 Thanks.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. ZEUNIK: Next is Mr. Paul Krueger.

16 MR. KRUEGER: Paul Krueger, 1801 U.S.
17 Highway 150, Bloomington. And I wholeheartedly
18 agree with what Mr. Bittner said, and I have a
19 prepared written statement that basically says
20 the same things Mr. Bittner touched on. But I
21 would like to -- with the Chairman's permission,
22 I have copies for the committee members, if
23 that's okay.

24 MR. ZEUNIK: Yes.

1 MR. KRUEGER: The reason for this, I
2 want to be on record of my position. Also, after
3 testimony to the Bloomington City Planning
4 Commission, a two-page letter was condensed down
5 to what the City Council seen in a blurb that
6 said Paul Krueger was against the idea. So I
7 didn't think I was fairly represented at that
8 meeting and so I have these copies.

9 MR. ZEUNIK: Thank you.

10 MR. KRUEGER: A couple of things that I
11 would just like to touch on, we talk about
12 traffic counts. I believe, if I'm not wrong,
13 that's over a 24-hour period, wrong or right?

14 MR. MITCHELL: Right.

15 MR. KRUEGER: Correct, okay. Thank
16 you. What's the traffic counts on Veterans
17 Parkway between seven o'clock and nine o'clock in
18 the morning and also three o'clock to six o'clock
19 in the afternoon? I've been on Veterans Parkway
20 at 10:30 at night. It's not congested. There's
21 certain hours of the day that this community
22 works, it will always be that way, you're always
23 going to have congestion. To think that if we
24 build an east side bypass that major employers,

1 retailers, and shopping centers are going to
2 move, it's not going to happen. Veterans Parkway
3 will still be congested.

4 The other things I wanted to touch on
5 was they talked about -- I heard comments
6 pertaining to selling your property. Believe it
7 or not, at least I do, some things are not for
8 sale. I also heard comments -- I'll have to ask
9 for one of my copies back -- the results of a
10 completed study by Downs were unknown because
11 Downs had not called them yet. That would
12 indicate to me that we are not looking at all the
13 options that need to be considered.

14 And one other comment that I would like
15 to make is also within -- in reference to Downs.
16 They are no longer included in the
17 intergovernmental agreement, and two years ago
18 Downs and the Village of Towanda were both
19 so-called players in this proposal.

20 And the last thing, I wholeheartedly
21 agree with what Mr. Bittner said. Therefore, I'm
22 asking when the Land Use and Transportation
23 Committees meet to take action on the
24 intergovernmental agreement that these committees

1 vote on -- that the committees vote the agreement
2 down along with the proposed east side bypass,
3 send a message that a convenience road will not
4 be built at the expense of the residents of
5 McLean County.

6 Thank you for your time and
7 consideration.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Frank Weiting.

10 MR. WEITING: Thank you very much. My
11 name is Frank Weiting, W-e-i-t-i-n-g, mailing
12 address 3205 Morrissey Drive, but I am right out
13 in that corridor right near Mr. Krueger. I
14 believe it will touch part of my property.

15 Many good comments have been made so I
16 will try not to duplicate those. I think life is
17 all about perspectives and it's how you view your
18 community and where you want to go with it. I
19 see Bloomington-Normal as a community just that's
20 all rampant with growth, more growth, more
21 growth; we got to have more, we got to have
22 bigger, we got to have better.

23 I've been a farmer all my life. I live
24 on a piece of property out here on the south side

1 of Route 150 just east of Road 1750 East. Some
2 of that's been in my family for 116 years. I
3 farmed there all my life. The farmland is very
4 dear to me. And what we're talking about is not
5 people's houses, or not -- yeah, not people's
6 houses, it's people's lives. These people in
7 this room tonight, I think, are all here for one
8 reason, they don't want the highway, and that's
9 where I'm at. I think this highway is out of
10 character, particularly this section coming from
11 Towanda Barnes down to I-74 on the south. It's
12 just totally out of character for our region. I
13 really believe another plan needs to be derived
14 there.

15 I would like to catch up a little bit.
16 The comment was made more than once the land
17 inside this now is priced beyond farmland. Well,
18 nobody's approached me to buy my property, and
19 I'm very happy of that. And I'm sure, if this
20 corridor comes, it's going to be bought at
21 farmland prices, just like another person said,
22 opportunity to give it up.

23 I hope in my lifetime I don't see this,
24 but I know it will probably happen. My

1 suggestion to everybody in the governmental thing
2 is to back up a little bit on your perspective,
3 try to slow some of this thing a little bit.

4 And this subdivision, Eastlake, I think
5 it's called, has jumped clear across, totally out
6 of character. We say we have planning, but yet I
7 look at the map and I say where is the planning?
8 So I will not go on and on, I'm just going on the
9 record to say I'm opposed to this; there's got to
10 be a better plan; it's just out of character for
11 our region.

12 Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Larry Reeser.

15 MR. REESER: I'm Larry Reeser, and it's
16 spelled R-e-e-s-e-r. My address is 16838 East
17 775 North Road, Heyworth. My wife and I own
18 property on the south side of Route 74, a 95-acre
19 tract of ground that is in the pink area now.

20 My observation, I can echo the thoughts
21 that Mr. Bittner shared and also the thoughts
22 that Mr. Krueger shared. The one thing that
23 bothered me was that when we met at these
24 meetings in 2003 and in that time frame that the

1 Village of Downs and Towanda were involved in
2 this voting equation, and now they've been
3 eliminated. So someone needs to answer that, why
4 are they eliminated from this process.

5 My other observation is that tonight, or
6 it used to be -- or I guess back in 2003 that
7 there was this idea of this south corridor road
8 that was on the map and then it was taken off of
9 the map because it wasn't supposed to be put on
10 there. Now tonight I heard comments about part
11 of the study being extended to that south
12 corridor road, and I don't think that's right.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Kenneth Baker

16 MR. BAKER: Mr. Bittner said what I
17 needed to say. Thank you.

18 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Mike Phillips.

19 MR. PHILLIPS: My name is Mike
20 Phillips. I actually live about forty miles
21 north of town, but I'm running for state
22 representative, and this entire corridor would be
23 in my district if I were to be elected so I
24 thought that I should come here and see exactly

1 what this was about.

2 Certainly I would not presume to render
3 any opinion based on what little I've seen here
4 this evening, but the one thing that I would
5 suggest is that what I didn't see was other
6 alternatives to this highway corridor. I presume
7 that they've been examined, but that certainly
8 wasn't clear here this evening. Some people
9 mentioned, you know, expanding Towanda-Barnes
10 Road and doing some other things. It would be
11 nice to include that on the cost and benefits of
12 those so that people could make a little bit more
13 informed decision.

14 I was also a little disappointed that
15 Towanda and Downs and some of the other
16 communities affected don't seem to be here this
17 evening, either. Most of the folks sitting here,
18 I don't think, are represented by Bloomington or
19 Normal. They are represented on the County
20 Board, but they're also represented by township
21 government, and it would be nice to see those
22 government agencies included as well, as those
23 township people are a lot closer to the people
24 that would be affected.

1 So, you know, I must say that I
2 appreciate you having this hearing and putting
3 all this information out, and I encourage you to
4 keep this process open and involve as many people
5 as possible.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. ZEUNIK: Ms. Linda Olson.

8 MS. OLSON: Good evening. Linda Olson,
9 O-l-s-o-n. I am here tonight representing the
10 McLean County Farm Bureau. Our membership
11 represents 65 percent of owners and farmers in
12 McLean County. In 2003 our board made a motion
13 not to endorse any east side transportation plan
14 unless it would be built on existing primary
15 right-of-way. I am here tonight, three years
16 later, to let you know that our board still
17 stands behind that motion.

18 Mr. Dick just recently said that 900
19 acres is a relatively minimal amount of acreage,
20 but when you include with that development that's
21 going to happen we're talking many more thousands
22 of acres. This is prime farmland that is farm
23 producing, land that, once taken, is gone forever
24 to farming. It can never be reclaimed.

1 The McLean County Farm Bureau recommends
2 that the McLean County Board only adopt a
3 transportation plan which is developed over
4 existing roads.

5 Thank you.

6 (Appause.)

7 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Myron Wilke.

8 MR. WILKE: I am Myron Wilke. I live on
9 Towanda-Barnes Road across from the Palace
10 Theater. I did not come here prepared to make a
11 statement, but as I've been very much involved,
12 partially because I live on Towanda Barnes Road,
13 I agree with Tim Bittner, but I also disagree in
14 one respect in that I think that Towanda Barnes
15 someday will be Veterans Parkway. I live on
16 there now, and I think it's that already.

17 But, anyway, I think it ought to be
18 farther away to the east from Towanda Barnes.
19 Otherwise, it looks like it's a parallel road.
20 And I would think that this time, because the
21 businesses will move out east and very quickly,
22 it won't be long and Towanda Barnes will be, as I
23 said, another Veterans Parkway.

24 I would suggest if we're going to use

1 land, and I own land there and I agree with Tim,
2 we're using up very valuable farmland, but if
3 we're going to do that, and I'm afraid we are,
4 then it ought to be at least two miles out or
5 more so that you have a definite separate highway
6 that will not become immediately another Veterans
7 Parkway.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Royce Kraft.

11 MR. KRAFT: Royce Kraft, spelled with a
12 K, 17413 North 2000 East. Well, a lot of stuff I
13 wrote notes on while people were talking has kind
14 of been covered. This is the same corridor
15 they've proposed for I-55 before it was built.
16 It's the same corridor that's proposed every ten
17 years. Recently, you've been proposing it every
18 two years, and I suppose it will be every year
19 from now on.

20 You don't have the south side extension
21 on it like somebody slipped up last time we had
22 these meetings and put on it. You spent millions
23 on studies. You want to spend more millions on
24 studies. You're going to spend money on this

1 thing until you get somebody to tell you exactly
2 what you want to hear. One of the things that
3 was brought up, we got to get this thing done, we
4 got to get a moratorium on the ground because if
5 we don't it's going to cost us \$50,000 an acre.
6 Thank you, Mr. Dirk -- or Dick. You've also set
7 the price on the ground. If it's worth \$50,000
8 when you want to build the highway, it should be
9 worth \$50,000 when you buy the ground.

10 If you drive on those routes in the
11 morning, the traffic coming from the south all
12 stops and goes into Ireland Grove Road or Route
13 9; coming from the north it goes into Route 9 or
14 Ireland Grove Road. Nothing going all the way
15 north, nothing going all the way south.
16 Afternoons, it's completely reversed. In between
17 those times there's not that much traffic.

18 So improvement of Towanda Barnes from
19 Towanda all the way from 150 to a six-lane
20 highway and rerouting the traffic to go through
21 the Town of Towanda or through the Town of Downs
22 and using the existing interchanges will save a
23 lot more money than building a new right-of-way
24 with new accesses to those interstates.

1 If you drive Veterans in the morning and
2 afternoon, you'll notice that most of the traffic
3 doesn't go all the way through town. It's going
4 from the south side of town into town, north side
5 of town into town, and in the afternoons it's
6 reversing itself. But you get past Sam's Club
7 there's hardly any traffic compared to what it is
8 like down Route 9 interchange on Veterans.

9 If you upgrade old 66 so it will feed
10 traffic from the interchange of Towanda and dump
11 it into Towanda Barnes outside of Towanda and
12 dump it into Airport Road, you'll take a lot of
13 that traffic and put it where people want to go
14 without having to take Towanda Barnes up and then
15 go into town.

16 There's a lot of traffic there now. If
17 they had a decent way of getting to Airport Road
18 with a multi-lane highway, there would be a lot
19 of people taking that. Upgrade 150 so people
20 from the south working in the Downs area can get
21 into State Farm without having to backtrack onto
22 Towanda Barnes. You can feed people right into
23 State Farm off 150 real easy. Improve your
24 east-west roads. All those subdivisions are

1 going out here to the east. Those people work
2 straight in town. They aren't going north, they
3 aren't going south. They're going to State
4 Farm.

5 The moratorium, its not a land taking,
6 supposedly, but once that moratorium is put on
7 there, if anybody wanted to sell that ground,
8 they couldn't get rid of it, except maybe to a
9 developer who will sit on it so he can put his
10 commercial enterprises around the exchanges. If
11 it wasn't for any federal money helping you out
12 on all these studies and federal money to help
13 build this road, you wouldn't be even considering
14 it.

15 And I, in a roundabout way, had
16 information from one of the County Board members
17 who's been trying to find out who's been pushing
18 for this bypass corridor, whatever you want to
19 call it, nobody will tell him. Somebody has to
20 be pushing this thing every two years, every ten
21 years, keep bringing it up, bringing it up,
22 bringing it up until they get it done. And I
23 don't think it's probably anybody on the board
24 members sitting here.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Melvin Jeter.

3 MR. JETER: My name is a Melvin Jeter;
4 last name is J-e-t-e-r. I live at 19906 East
5 1600 North Road. I am not a farmer, but I have
6 about almost six acres of land out there. My
7 home is my principal investment. I'm not a
8 wealthy developer. This is my principal
9 investment.

10 I've sent each of you either an e-mail
11 letter or a letter by mail in the event that you
12 didn't have an e-mail address. I strongly
13 support everything Tim Bittner said. What I want
14 to do today is just to highlight a few points
15 from the letter that I sent you, and some of
16 these points are for people that did not see that
17 letter.

18 I'd like to ask the question which
19 intersection in town, which highway, has the
20 worst traffic, Route 9 east of town or Route 9
21 west of town? East of town or west of town if
22 you went out Route 9. If you don't know the
23 answer to that question, you do not live in this
24 community. The worst traffic in this town is

1 Route 9 west of town, and the reason the traffic
2 is bad west of town is we have an interchange off
3 of a controlled access highway there. These
4 folks want to put six interchanges on the east
5 side of town, off of a controlled access
6 highway.

7 The problem over here is 18-wheel truck
8 traffic. You're going to put 18-wheel truck
9 traffic in six different places, possibly, on the
10 east side of town. Now I have to ask you, do the
11 people on the east side of town in these nice new
12 subdivisions, do they want that 18-wheel traffic
13 in their back yard? Do future homeowners want
14 that traffic in their back yard? Instead of
15 building roads like the Towanda Barnes Road,
16 here's -- you could easily build along existing
17 roads farther out that would not interrupt the
18 community and change the growth.

19 What's being proposed here is a massive
20 redesign control of the use of the land inside
21 this corridor, in the corridor, and to the
22 immediate outside of the corridor. That's real
23 power. If you control the use of the land in the
24 future, you control power. You don't have to own

1 the land, you control a fortune. And certainly
2 individuals are going to get wealthy off of this,
3 but the people living in this pink area are not.
4 They're not even going to be able to recover the
5 full value of the land.

6 I'm 63 years old. Two and a half years
7 ago when we went through this I had a massive
8 heart attack and almost died. I don't know how
9 long I will live, but I doubt I'll live to see
10 that expressway built. My house sits right here,
11 right in the middle one of these interchanges.
12 If I die, my wife is left with a piece of
13 property that's worthless. This is our main
14 investment, and yet you want to put a moratorium,
15 or at least some of the powers that be, and I
16 hope and pray that our county representatives
17 will put a stop to this.

18 But some of these people in Bloomington
19 and Normal, they want to put a moratorium on what
20 I can do with my property. I guess if I want to
21 put a building up, a pool up or something like
22 that, I can't even do that.

23 I pay taxes. I'm the head of the Math
24 Department at Illinois Wesleyan. I'm not a

1 farmer, but I pay taxes, I've been a good
2 citizen, and now you want to come in and put a
3 moratorium on my life. You want to tell me that,
4 within my lifetime, my property is worthless?

5 Look at what's happened to special
6 interests. If you come down -- and this is not
7 the map that I was hoping to see, maybe it is, we
8 have new subdivisions that have just been
9 approved on both sides of this proposed
10 moratorium land. Powerful developers have been
11 approved to put subdivisions on both sides of
12 this pink road. I guess they've already started
13 developing, or at least drawing up plans for
14 that. In other words, they've already decided
15 where this road's going, study or no study.

16 With these subdivisions, and maybe this
17 is one right here, that would force the roadway
18 over here. So the special interest group, their
19 future is not being controlled, they're not on
20 moratorium. It's full speed ahead, profit
21 ahead. But people who live in that pink area,
22 and there is lots of homes in that pink area, it
23 looks to me like they connected the dots on homes
24 to draw that pink corridor.

1 So I just want you to ask yourself,
2 what's my family to do. My property will not --
3 I have a nice home; I have almost six acres of
4 land. It ought to be worth something, but it
5 won't be. It will be seized cheap.

6 I have a quote that was October the
7 12th, 2005, in The Pantagraph. This is from Mr.
8 Hamilton. There is great pressure to develop on
9 the east side, Hamilton said. We have to give
10 developers something they can hang their hats
11 on. I -- you know, you just got to ask yourself,
12 is McLean County the kind of county, the kind of
13 community that people are safe in investing,
14 building homes, maybe small businesses?

15 There's a lot of advantages to building
16 roads like Towanda Barnes. Towanda Barnes used
17 to be a 55-mile-an-hour speed limit until they
18 widened it and put curbs in and lowered the speed
19 limit to 45 and then said now we need a road we
20 can drive 55 on. Another road two or three miles
21 east of Towanda Barnes, another road but not a
22 controlled access road, would come naturally. It
23 would not destroy the east side of the community,
24 it wouldn't throw a bunch of 18-wheel truck

1 traffic over there, it wouldn't put people's
2 lives on hold.

3 And yes, there -- you know, the people
4 that own that land, I keeping hearing the farmers
5 and all, they would sell that land if somebody
6 appeared and offered them a certain amount of
7 money. Well, you know, the people that have
8 owned that for generations, some people over a
9 hundred years, or people like us who have lived
10 there about twenty years and invested our lives
11 and our money in the land, if there's a profit to
12 be made, and my place is not for sale, I ought to
13 be the one to make it, not some future developer,
14 not some future truck stop for 18-wheel trucks
15 that will sit where my lot now sits. This is
16 still the United States of America, and I hope
17 the American dream is still alive. And I hope, I
18 hope and I pray, that our County Board will put a
19 quick end to this kind of nonsense.

20 I hear about all these great public
21 meetings we've had. I want you to know it's a
22 real trick to find out about some of the public
23 meetings that have been held in our two local
24 communities. I've received a six-page letter

1 about a white fence that's going to be
2 constructed in this neighborhood a half a mile
3 from my house and inviting me to a hearing in
4 case I want to comment about that white fence.

5 This is the first letter, I believe,
6 that we've ever received that tells us about a
7 move to possibly take our home away from us. And
8 two and a half years ago when I called and asked
9 for information I was told our property wasn't
10 involved and I didn't need information. We had
11 to press hard to even get information in that
12 case.

13 So please look at the special interests
14 here. Ask yourself what it means to be living
15 out there in that corridor and to have your lives
16 put on hold while the developers are free to go.
17 Two new neighborhoods on both sides of this
18 proposed road have been approved. That's not
19 fair.

20 (Appause.)

21 MR. ZEUNIK: Jerri Jeter.

22 MS. JETER: My name is Jerri Jeter. How
23 you doing, Mr. Mitchell?

24 MR. MITCHELL: Good, and you?

1 MS. JETER: Fine. I saw you tonight, I
2 remembered -- two years ago, do you remember
3 sitting on my screened porch for two hours?

4 MR. MITCHELL: Mm-hmm.

5 MS. JETER: And do you remember how we
6 discussed well, perhaps if all this wonderful
7 building that's going on out there and all the
8 new subdivisions do go in and maybe, just as
9 happened with Towanda, we could put a Towanda
10 Barnes Road there. We discussed that and
11 discussed that and I remember as you left you
12 said the interstate. By then -- back then it was
13 a bypass, no other name, bypass. I want a bypass
14 there; I think we need a bypass there.

15 And after the Bloomington City Council I
16 remember calling Mayor Stockton and talking on
17 the phone with him for a while. And he said
18 well, you know, if you folks could sell that
19 house before this moratorium goes in, you might
20 get full value. After the moratorium goes in, it
21 will be devalued.

22 I want the highway, not the bypass. I
23 want the highway. I think we need the highway.
24 I want the highway. I think we need the highway,

1 not another Towanda Barnes. So as you might can
2 guess, I think we'd benefit from a grid-type
3 street when the time comes for that.

4 Also, I wanted to ask a question of the
5 Assistant State's Attorney. I believe you talked
6 about hardships, a hardship case; you mentioned
7 that. Who discussed that?

8 MR. HUG: Yes. The agreement allows
9 different government entities to soften the
10 impact of the moratorium in the event of
11 hardships.

12 MS. JETER: What would be an example, in
13 your estimation there?

14 MR. HUG: The agreement just refers to
15 extreme hardships. I don't have an example.

16 MS. JETER: I could use an example.
17 Really, for my understanding, I'm thick-headed
18 headed, and I just wondered if you had an example
19 of hardships of the past.

20 MR. HUG: No, ma'am, I am not going to
21 bind any of the government agencies by giving an
22 example. That's going to be up to the government
23 agencies. Basically what would happen, I would
24 expect, somebody with a hardship would approach

1 the government agency and say this is an extreme
2 hardship, and the government agency would have
3 the authority to weigh the facts and make a
4 determination based on that.

5 MS. JETER: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN BASS: Please, please. I don't
7 want to intercede, but we're not supposed to be
8 fielding questions from you folks. You give us
9 your information, give us your opinion, and it is
10 getting a little bit late.

11 MS. JETER: Okay, I didn't have these
12 questions until I listened, and so I was trying
13 to understand. He discussed the moratorium or
14 the taking later rather than sooner. And I'll
15 just end up with this last statement, then.
16 Later rather than sooner doesn't mean a lot to
17 me. It's still going to happen.

18 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Drake Zimmerman.

19 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Mr. Chairman, my name is
20 Drake Zimmerman. I live at 20722 Cheney's Grove
21 Road. And my comments are actually more
22 questions. We've been looking at this bypass for
23 awhile. When the bypass actually comes in, where
24 will the town be? When I moved to town twenty

1 some years ago, the center of town was over on
2 Main Street and the edge of town was not Towanda
3 Barnes, as it is now, but it was near Veterans
4 Parkway.

5 We're not building this bypass, should
6 it be built, in five years or ten years. What
7 will the town look like fifteen years from now;
8 where will the town be when the bypass gets
9 built? So we may be looking at the equivalent of
10 putting a new Veterans Parkway through there.

11 Secondly, many of us who own land out
12 here and live in this county love McLean County
13 because it is a very rural county. This is a map
14 of urban big picture. We're living in a rural
15 community. Where is the plan for farmland
16 preservation in the county?

17 Third, how can we -- I've been working
18 very hard on the Greenways Committee and other
19 committees as part of Friends of Kickapoo. I
20 live down on Kickapoo down here. Development has
21 already crossed the Kickapoo, or it's about to.
22 How can we develop the natural areas and maintain
23 them so we have the quality of life, and for
24 those of you who drink Bloomington water, the

1 quality of water and other natural resources
2 here, we might turn our noses up at a map. We
3 all turned our noses up at Bloomington water.

4 So let's look at the environmental
5 impact that we're having. We can get ahead of
6 it. We can take the areas that are illustrated
7 here in purple and turn them into wetlands, turn
8 them into riparian buffer areas so we can
9 actually maintain and naturally upgrade the
10 area.

11 I chose this community. It's a fabulous
12 community to live in, and we can both maintain it
13 and improve that quality. So, largely, how can
14 we create a place where we really want to live?
15 How can we get ahead of development? How can we
16 work together with developers and with everyone
17 else here?

18 So I apologize for asking questions.
19 How many people, for the members of the board,
20 how many of you -- how many voices have you heard
21 in favor of this particular bypass? I hope that
22 I'm the last one on here so I might say that's
23 all, folks, and that may be what you most want to
24 hear.

1 Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Bill Friedrich.

4 MR. FRIEDRICH: Bill Friedrich,
5 F-r-i-e-d-r-i-c-h, 16205 East Road 825 North,
6 Bloomington. I'd like to first off say that I
7 agree wholeheartedly with what Tim Bittner had to
8 say. Thank you, Tim. You did a great job.
9 Also, Mr. Jeter really kind of sums up what I
10 believe are some of our constituents in the real
11 community.

12 I live -- well, on this map I could say
13 that right now I'm not in this east corridor
14 bypass. However, if we go back two years ago to
15 the map previous to this I was included in this.
16 And I just wanted to make a point that I believe
17 this is kind of like a smoke screen. I think the
18 map in the pink is short about one-third in that
19 area. The 4,200 acres, I think their main goal
20 is to continue the bypass to the south; I believe
21 that's inevitable. So I'd appreciate the board,
22 if they'd really look at that as the whole
23 picture, because that is their inevitable goal,
24 to continue the loop from the east all the way to

1 the south.

2 Please take that into consideration.

3 That's my main idea, that even though it's not on
4 here, unfortunately, they showed all their cards
5 the first time, and it's pretty typical, once you
6 do that, you need to regroup to sell your ideas.
7 So that's their compromise, but I don't believe
8 that. I think in the long-term the bypass will
9 continue to add in the rest of the third and be
10 quite honest about it, because that's the way
11 it's going to go.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. David Poppie.

14 MR. POPPIE: My name is David Poppie,
15 spelled P-o-p-p-i-e. My mailing address is 18971
16 High Drive in Bloomington. While it's a mailing
17 address of Bloomington, it's actually in Old Town
18 Township. It's near the intersection of 900
19 North and 1900 East Towanda-Barnes Road. My wife
20 and I moved there about eighteen years ago. We
21 bought a lot there about eighteen years ago and
22 had lived in Normal previously.

23 It was zoned agriculture and residential
24 and joined some farmland. And we did not buy it

1 in the naive assumption that there would not be
2 change or growth. We knew that that would be the
3 case. We did expect, though, that the underlying
4 plan that was in place for agriculture and
5 residential zoning would continue and, therefore,
6 that it would retain the residential
7 characteristics that we found to be so
8 attractive.

9 So while we moved there without the --
10 we did not move there with the assumption that
11 there wouldn't be growth, we did not move there
12 with the hope that there would be a bypass near
13 us. And so the whole concept of, or the phrase
14 of not in my back yard has taken on a whole new
15 meaning. And so while I appreciate everyone's
16 comments, and having been there a little bit less
17 than twenty years, it pales in comparison to a
18 family that's been there for nearly 120, but that
19 is an extended period of time.

20 I would just ask that, as this difficult
21 process for everyone here unfolds, that you take
22 into consideration that all of these interests
23 really revolve around the people who live here,
24 not just the businesses that are here. If it

1 weren't for the people that were here, the
2 businesses wouldn't be, and we -- I ask that you
3 take that into consideration as this process
4 unfolds.

5 Thank you for your time.

6 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Tim Herman or Ed
7 Harold?

8 MR. HERMAN: My name's Tim Herman. For
9 the purpose of this testimony, I'm an elder at
10 Victory Christian Center located at 406 South
11 Clinton in Bloomington.

12 My pastor, Ed Harold, is here with me
13 tonight. Our issue is pretty succinct. There
14 have been many people that have been talking to
15 you about some issues that they foresee in the
16 future. We've living it right now. Our church
17 has outgrown its building. We're landlocked
18 where we're at in Bloomington so we began looking
19 for property, and eight months ago we purchased
20 seven acres of land just north of Highway 150 and
21 Towanda Barnes. It wasn't used for farmland, it
22 was just undeveloped land. We bought that land,
23 and it took all the money we had, with the full
24 intent to build our church.

1 The issue that we have now is we've put
2 our church building on Clinton Street on the
3 market; we have a written offer. We're seriously
4 considering taking the offer, which allows us
5 time to build the church on the property that's
6 now in the pink zone. And I guess our dilemma is
7 pretty easy to understand. If you put a
8 moratorium on development, it will be a grave
9 hardship.

10 We've taken the congregation's money and
11 from a leadership standpoint thought that we made
12 a wise investment on their behalf. And then to
13 have a local government essentially devastate
14 those plans where we wouldn't even be able to
15 sell the property so we could maybe move
16 somewhere else, we're experiencing what to do
17 now.

18 And if we tried to sell the property
19 now, with the publicity that's out, who's going
20 to buy it today. And so what we're experiencing
21 in real life is what is going to be passed on to
22 many other people here. It's just we're living
23 it now. So we'd ask you to seriously reconsider
24 your moratorium.

1 I was involved in -- I own a small
2 company, I've got about forty employees -- and
3 I've been involved in issues like this in dealing
4 with local governments in Minnesota and Texas and
5 Illinois. And one of the things that I thought
6 was rather progressive in Minnesota dealing with
7 the issues of just compensation is that before
8 you can do certain things as a local government
9 in Minnesota you have to give five years notice.
10 And at least then you give people some time to
11 plan and to prepare.

12 And I think the dilemma that I've seen
13 with this county board and also with
14 Bloomington-Normal is that it just seems like
15 every few years you keep talking about this plan
16 but you keep changing it. And the problem with
17 that is you're simply moving the pain and the
18 anxiety from one group of people to another, and
19 you're simply transferring it back and forth.

20 And the hesitancy and anxiety that
21 happens in real people's lives, it's real. And
22 you can certainly sense this as elected
23 officials, what you're doing and what you're not
24 doing is really affecting real people. There's a

1 lot of emotion here, and I just think you need to
2 seriously consider that.

3 But I thought that our particular
4 example is one that's on us right now. We simply
5 don't know what to do because of what this board
6 and others, what you're contemplating. And I'm
7 not sure what the legal definition of hardship
8 is; I can tell you in the real world this is
9 extreme hardship on us, and we don't know what to
10 do.

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. ZEUNIK: Mr. Chairman, that
14 concludes the list of individuals who signed up
15 to speak this evening.

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN BASS: Thank you, folks, for
18 coming. I appreciate all you folks from Normal,
19 from Bloomington, and our board members. And I
20 hope -- I am sure good things will come of this,
21 when you can get people together and look at each
22 other and agree or disagree and come to
23 conclusions that are in the best interests of
24 everyone.

1 Mr. Gordon asked to say a word.

2 CHAIRMAN GORDON: Let me first echo
3 Duffy Bass's sentiments. We had no idea for
4 certain how many people to expect. It's -- well,
5 there may be an empty chair or three here and
6 there, but this is the functional equivalent of a
7 full house. And I want to add my sentiments to
8 his, and I'm sure I speak for other members of
9 the board, who can speak for themselves perfectly
10 well, we are appreciative of your presence and
11 your concern.

12 I have asked the question to the County
13 Administrator, Mr. Zeunik, as to whether or not
14 it might be possible for the written transcript
15 taken by the court reporter to be made available
16 at a public forum, possibly on the County's web
17 site. He has assured me he is going to look into
18 this, that it is certainly a possibility, and
19 that would enable others who were not able to be
20 here tonight, on all sides, pro and con and
21 anywhere in between, to access the information
22 that has been generated this evening. And I
23 wanted to be sure to mention that for your sake
24 and for the sake of others who were not present.

1 CHAIRMAN BASS: Thank you, George. One
2 last person, and I knew I couldn't get out of
3 here without him talking, Stanley Hoselton from
4 Chenoa.

5 MR. HOSELTON: From District 1, which is
6 everyplace north of Route 9, we're from
7 Livingston to Ford to Woodford tonight, Cavalini
8 and I represent you people. You did not -- I
9 think most of these people are from my part of
10 the world. You have not fallen on deaf ears.
11 And I'll let it go just at that, because I
12 spent -- I got here today early, and from noon
13 on I've been here reading everything I could get
14 on this.

15 Quite honestly, it's very difficult
16 because it's damned if you do and damned if you
17 don't. But listening to everybody's dilemma, I
18 understand exactly where you're coming from. And
19 I think the Land Use and the Transportation
20 Committee will -- we're working in cooperation
21 with the City of Normal and the City of
22 Bloomington. So, I mean, you talk to us like
23 we're the only cats on the block. We are not.
24 But we'll see what happens.

1 Thank you very much for coming

2 (Applause.)

3 CHAIRMAN BASS: One last thing, folks.

4 I want you all to pay attention to this: Drive
5 carefully on your way home.

6 Thank you.

7 (Whereupon the hearing concluded at 6:50 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2) SS
3 COUNTY OF MC LEAN)

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6
7 I, FRAN A. ANDERSON, do hereby certify that I
8 am a court reporter doing business in the City of
9 Bloomington, County of McLean, State of Illinois;
10 that I reported in machine shorthand the
11 testimony given at the taking of said hearing;
12 that the transcript is a true record of the
13 testimony given at the hearing; and that the
14 foregoing is a true and correct transcript of my
15 shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid.

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