

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – OCTOBER 7, 2002

LANGSTAFF ROAD CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ISLINGTON AVENUE TO WESTON ROAD WITHDRAWAL OF “BUMP-UP” REQUEST

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends:

1. That the City of Vaughan withdraw its “Bump-up” request pertaining to the Region of York’s Class Environmental Assessment for the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road, and that the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the Region of York be so advised; and
2. That during the detail design stage of the Langstaff Road project, the Region of York be requested to work with the City of Vaughan on the provision of sidewalks and illumination along the roadway, to minimize the impact on existing roadside vegetation and to provide enhanced planting wherever practicable, and to explore the feasibility of incorporating a continuous raised planted center median between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road.

Purpose

To report on the outcome of the public information meeting regarding the Region’s proposed widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road that was held on September 23, 2002 pursuant to Council’s direction, and to recommend the City withdraw its “Bump-up” request on the project.

Background - Analysis and Options

Staff submitted a report to the Committee of the Whole meeting on August 19, 2002 with respect to the status of the Region of York’s Class Environmental Assessment for the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road. A copy of this report is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

Council, at its meeting on August 26, 2002, resolved the following:

“That this matter be referred to the Committee of the Whole meeting of October 7, 2002, to allow an information meeting between the community, the ratepayers associations, City Staff, and York Region Staff, and the detailed road design for the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road be presented at the meeting.”

In response to this direction, Staff organized a public information meeting for the evening of Monday, September 23, 2002 at the St. Gregory the Great Catholic Academy in Woodbridge. Notice of the meeting was provided to the residents living in the area bounded by Islington Avenue, Rutherford Road, Hwy 400 and Regional Road 7 on or about September 5, 2002. An estimated 14,000 Notices were delivered by bulk mail to homes in this area.

Over 100 residents attended the meeting of which 81 signed the attendance sheet. Staff from the Region and City also attended the meeting together with several members of Council. The meeting was structured to provide area residence with an opportunity to review the limits of the roadwork and the preliminary design drawings, and to discuss the details of the proposed undertaking with Regional staff. Over the course of the evening, good dialogue took place between Staff and area residents. Of the residents that attended the meeting, 26 took the time to

complete comment sheets. Based on discussions with area residents during the course of the evening and the written comments, the following main issues/concerns were identified:

1. Noise levels are increasing due to the escalating traffic volume on Langstaff Road, which is expected to only get worse if the road is widened. Many residents expressed concerns that the issue of noise attenuation has not been adequately addressed;
2. Providing for pedestrian safety through the installation of sidewalks and streetlights along both sides of Langstaff Road;
3. The road widening and reconstruction should be designed to limit the impact to the existing roadside vegetation;
4. The timing of the construction of Langstaff Road should not coincide with the widening and reconstruction of Rutherford Road;
5. The means of treating and managing the storm water run-off from the widened Langstaff Road should be addressed;
6. More air pollution from increasing traffic on Langstaff Road;
7. Vibration from the proposed road construction activity may impact the integrity of the existing noise barriers/fences along Langstaff Road;
8. Arterial road improvements are not keeping up to the high rate of growth in the City resulting in traffic congestion on many roads in the Woodbridge area. Rutherford Road, Major Mackenzie Drive and Islington Avenue should also be widened and reconstructed;
9. Speeding on Langstaff Road; and
10. Rutherford Road and Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Pine Valley Drive should be widened first, then the need to widen Langstaff Road between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road should be revisited.

The first four issues noted above are address in the previous staff report on the Langstaff Road Environmental Assessment that is included as Attachment 1 to this report. The remaining issues are discussed below on a point-by-point basis.

Point 5. Storm Water Management

The means of treating and managing the storm water run-off from the widened Langstaff Road was raised as a concern by a number of individuals. In response, the Regional Staff advised that the proposed design of Langstaff Road includes the widened to four lanes, curb and gutter, and storm sewers. The storm sewers will collect the surface water via catchbasins and convey it to a suitable storm outlet. The storm outlets and the means of treating the quality and quantity of the storm water runoff will be addressed at the detailed design stage of the project in consultation with the City and TRCA.

Point 6. Increased Air Pollution

Many residents that attended the meeting raised concerns with respect to the potential for an increase in air pollution from the additional vehicular traffic expected to travel Langstaff Road once the road is widened. It is Staff's understanding that free flow traffic creates less air pollution than stop and go traffic. Accordingly, it is not anticipated that the proposed widening will have a significant adverse impact on air quality.

Point 7. Integrity of the Existing Noise Barriers/Fences

A number of residents, particularly those that abut Langstaff Road, raised a concern that vibration from the road construction activity may impact the integrity of the existing noise barriers/fences on Langstaff Road. In response to this issue, the Region advised that the condition of the existing structures abutting Langstaff Road would be monitored throughout the road construction, and if damage to the noise barriers occurred as a direct result of the construction activity, then the Region would make the necessary repairs at no cost to the homeowner.

Point 8. Arterial Road Improvements

A common concern expressed by many at the meeting was that arterial road improvements are not keeping up to the pace of growth in the City resulting in traffic congestion on many of the roads in the Woodbridge area. Many suggested that Rutherford Road, Major Mackenzie Drive and Islington Avenue should also be widened and reconstructed now. The Region advised that the current capital plan identifies the undertaking of substantial arterial roads improvements within the next ten years. Of specific note is the widening of Rutherford Road between Hwy 27 to Weston Road and Islington Avenue between Hwy 7 and Langstaff that is scheduled to commence in October 2002. Major Mackenzie Drive between Hwy 27 and Weston Road is scheduled for expansion in 2011.

Vaughan Council, on several past occasions, has asked through resolution that the Region of York accelerate its reconstruction and widening of Regional Roads in Vaughan to accommodate increased traffic. As well, Vaughan Engineering Department staff commented on the updated Region of York 10 Year Capital Plan and suggested that widening of several Region Roads be brought forward to alleviate traffic congestion.

Point 9. Speeding

Motorist speeding on Langstaff Road was noted as an on-going problem that may potentially get worse if the road is widened. In response, the Region noted that the posted speed on Langstaff Road is currently 50 km/h. A review of the speed limit could be undertaken, but that the enforcement of the speed limit is the responsibility of the York Region Police.

Point 10. Widen Other Roads First then Revisit the Need to Widen Langstaff Road

A Citizens Group was formed, following the "Bump-up" requests for the Langstaff Road Environmental Assessment, to meet with the Region to work towards consensus on widening Langstaff Road. Several members of this Group attended the September 23, 2002 meeting and voiced a concern that it was their understanding that Rutherford Road and Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Pine Valley Drive would be widened first, then the need to widen Langstaff Road between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road would be revisited.

Staff reviewed the documentation on file pertaining to the proposed timing for the widening of Langstaff and note that Regional Council, at its meeting on May 10, 2001, adopted the following staging plan for the road project:

"Staff be directed to proceed with the preparation of one contract, to be tendered in 2002, for the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road, subject to the work being constructed in the following stages:

Stage 1:

The widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road from Islington Avenue and Pine Valley Drive, and site preparation work between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road, to proceed first; and

Stage 2:

The widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road from Pine Valley Drive to Weston Road, to commence after Stage 1 and after the widening and reconstruction of Rutherford Road between Highway 27 and Weston Road.”

Clause 8, Report No. 5 of the Transportation and Works Committee, as adopted by Regional Council on May 10, 2001, provides a good background summary of the road project and is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

Subsequently, Regional Council, on September 19, 2002 adopted the following resolution contained in Clause 7, Report No. 8 of the Transportation and Works Committee:

“Whereas the Region's contract for the widening of Rutherford Road, including the York/Peel feedermain, from Napa Valley Drive to Weston Road, is to be in early September; and,

Whereas, the Region intends to proceed with the widening of Rutherford Road between Highway 27 and Napa Valley Drive, immediately upon acquisition of the required properties; and,

Whereas, Regional Council previously approved the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road from Islington Avenue to Weston Road, subject to the condition that the widening of Langstaff Road between Pine Valley Road and Weston Road proceed only once the widening of Rutherford Road between Highway 27 and Weston Road has been substantially completed;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Langstaff Road widening between Islington Avenue and Weston Road, be programmed in the Region's Ten-Year Roads Capital Program to proceed immediately following the substantial completion of the Rutherford Road reconstruction from Napa Valley Drive to Weston Road.”

Raised Planted Center Median

Near the end of the public meeting, an area resident suggested that the feasibility of incorporating a raised planted center median along Langstaff Road, as a means of providing a measure of noise attenuation, should be explored. Staff has reviewed the preliminary road design drawings and note that a painted centerline ranging between 2 to 3 metres wide is currently proposed along a substantial portion of Langstaff Road between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road. Accordingly, there would appear to be sufficient room to accommodate a raised center median without the need for further widening of the paved portion of the road. In addition to some noise attenuation, a raised center median would provide an improved streetscape and may also offer some measure of vibration attenuation. It is therefore recommended that Council pass a resolution requesting the Region to explore the feasibility of incorporating a continuous raised planted center median on Langstaff Road between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road at the detailed design stage of this project.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, and given that the City will be involved further in the detailed design stage of this road project, it is recommended that the City's "Bump-up" request on the Class

Environmental Assessment for the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road be withdrawn.

Attachments

Attachment 1. Item 11, Report No. 54 of the Committee of the Whole meeting on August 19, 2002

Attachment 2. Clause 8, Report No. 5 of the Transportation and Works Committee, as adopted by Regional Council on May 10, 2001

Report prepared by

Andrew Pearce, Development Supervisor, Engineering Planning & Studies, ext. 8235
Brendan Holly, Senior Manager Development/Transportation Engineering, ext. 8250

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Robinson, P. Eng.
Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 26, 2002

Item 11, Report No. 54, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on August 26, 2002, as follows:

By approving that this matter be referred to the Committee of the Whole meeting of October 7, 2002, in accordance with the memorandum of the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, dated August 23, 2002; and

By receiving the written submission from Mr. L. C. Angelantoni, Wycliffe Ratepayers Association, 75 Kiloran Avenue, Woodbridge, L4L 3A8.

11 **LANGSTAFF ROAD CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
ISLINGTON AVENUE TO WESTON ROAD
WITHDRAW OF "BUMP-UP" REQUEST**

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1) That this matter be referred to the Committee of the Whole meeting of September 3, 2002, to allow an information meeting between the community, the ratepayers associations, City staff, and York Region staff, and the detailed road design for the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road be presented at the meeting; and
- 2) That the following deputations be received:
 - a) Ms. Rita DeBartoli, 61 Wilshire Boulevard, Woodbridge, L4L 6X3; and
 - b) Ms. Nadia Magarelli, Weston Downs Ratepayers' Association, 81 Blackburn Boulevard, Woodbridge, L4L 7J5.

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends:

1. That the City of Vaughan withdraw its "Bump-up" request pertaining to the Region of York Class Environmental Assessment for Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road and that the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the Region of York be so advised; and,
2. That during the detail design stage, the Region of York be requested to work with the City of Vaughan on the provision of sidewalks and illumination along the roadway and to minimize the impact on existing roadside vegetation and to provide enhanced planting wherever practicable.

Purpose

This report provides an update on the status of the Region of York's Class Environmental Assessment for Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road, and recommends that the City withdraw its "Bump-up" request.

Background - Analysis and Options

In 1996, the Region of York initiated the Class Environmental Assessment study for the 3.5 kilometre section of Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road as shown on Attachment 1. This section of Langstaff Road is classified as an urban arterial roadway. The primary purpose of undertaking the study was to identify the optimum roadway improvements for Langstaff Road to accommodate the increasing east-west traffic volumes in the study area

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resulting from growth, and to enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety in the corridor. The Region retained the firm of Marshall Macklin Monaghan Consulting Engineers to undertake this Class EA study.

The Class EA concluded that Langstaff Road should be widened to four lanes (two lanes per direction) with turning and storage lanes at all intersections, curb and gutter, center medians at intersections, storm sewers and the provisions for sidewalk and illumination. The horizontal alignment of Langstaff will vary within the study corridor. The section of Langstaff between Islington Avenue and Pine Valley Drive will be widened asymmetrically to the north throughout most of the area including the existing Humber River Bridge. The existing centerline alignment at the intersections of Islington Avenue and at Pine Valley Drive will be maintained. The section of Langstaff Road between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road will be widened symmetrically around the existing centerline of the road. A retaining wall is proposed through a section approximately 65 metres in length on the north side of Langstaff Road, just east of Pine Valley Drive to avoid an encroachment onto private property. According to the conclusions of the Class EA, the preferred road design alternative can be accommodated within the existing right-of-way negating the need for additional property.

The Region of York completed the Environmental Assessment and issued the Notice of Completion on January 13, 2000. On February 14, 2000, Vaughan Council adopted the following to permit City Staff more time to review the Environmental Study Report :

"By requesting that the Minister of the Environment "Bump up" the environmental assessment on Langstaff Road from Weston Road to Islington Avenue."

In addition to the City, the Region also received "Bump-up" requests from the Weston Downs Ratepayers Association, the National Estates Ratepayers Group, and an area resident. As a result of the "Bump-up" requests, the Region undertook supplemental public consultation to address the concerns raised by the area residents.

Many important issues were raised, but the key ones of primary concern to the City included construction phasing, provisions for sidewalks and illumination, increased traffic noise, impacts to existing landscaping and private property. The following is a brief explanation of these issues and how the Region subsequently addressed them.

Construction Phasing

A concern was raised that both Rutherford Road and Langstaff Road could be under construction at the same time, which would cause traffic congestion. To address this concern, the Region adopted the following construction staging plan:

Stage One would see the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road from Islington Avenue to Pine Valley Drive to proceed first and begin construction in 2003.

Stage Two would involve the widening and reconstruction of Langstaff Road from Pine Valley Drive to Weston Road after Stage One and after substantial completion of the widening and reconstruction of Rutherford Road between Highway 27 and Weston Road.

Provision for Sidewalk and Illumination

With the proposed widening of Langstaff Road and increasing traffic volumes, pedestrian safety is a concern. In response to this issue, the Region has included provisions in the preliminary road design for sidewalk and illumination on both sides of Langstaff Road within the study area. When

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the detailed design proceeds. City staff will ensure that sidewalk and streetlighting are included in the road works at City cost (subject to funding approval). .../3

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Traffic Noise

Concerns regarding the differing levels of noise attenuation features along Langstaff Road and the impact that noise from increasing traffic volumes may have on the living environments of the abutting residential properties were noted. The existing noise attenuation features vary from none to board fences to some landscaping to noise fences. Subdivisions of various ages required differing noise attenuation measures as the land was developed. The main issue, as staff understands it, was for fair treatment of all residents abutting Langstaff Road with respect to noise attenuation.

Through the Class EA process, the Region reviewed and analyzed the noise levels. Noise attenuation measures are considered by comparing the difference between the existing and future-do-nothing versus the difference between the existing and future widening projected noise levels. Current MOEE noise protocol provides that where a project would result in a noise level increase of less than 5 dBA, noise mitigation measures would not be required. As demonstrated in the Region's Class EA study, the greatest noise level increase was 2.05 dBA. This is well below the requirement to consider noise mitigation measures. The Region is, therefore, not required to install noise attenuation features as part of the road works. If residents and Council wish to pursue the installation of noise attenuation features, this would have to be done as a separate initiative. Although of no benefit to mitigating noise, the Region has indicated that enhanced landscaping could be provided as part of the widening project to improve conditions west of Ansley Grove Road where residents do not already have a noise wall.

Impact to Existing Landscaping

It is recognized that the widening of Langstaff Road will impact some of the landscaping within the existing right-of-way. The Region has indicated that wherever possible, the design of Langstaff Road will incorporate the existing landscaping in the corridor. If sufficient space is available, enhanced planting can be considered. This issue can be addressed at the detailed design stage of the project in consultation with the City.

Impact to Private Property

According to the conclusions of the Class EA, the preferred road design alternative can be accommodated within the existing Langstaff Road right-of-way negating the need for additional property. Therefore, the Region does not anticipate encroachment into the adjacent properties including the National Golf Course.

Co-ordination of Projects

The region plans to construct a 300mm diameter watermain from the elevated storage tank on Ansley Grove Road along Langstaff Road to Islington Avenue as part of the West Woodbridge supply plan. A schedule B class EA for the watermain project was started by the Region last month and is expected to be completed in the fall of this year. The construction of the watermain will be co-ordinated with the proposed roadworks.

The City has just completed a class EA for the Pine Valley Pumping Station and forcemain on Langstaff Road from Pine Valley Drive to Islington Avenue. A separate item on this committee agenda is recommending that the region assume the responsibility for this project. The forcemain project will be co-ordinated with the proposed roadworks.

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Conclusion

Accordingly, based on the foregoing, and given that the City will be involved further in the detailed design stage of this road project, it is recommended that the City withdraw its "Bump-up" request on the Class Environmental Assessment for Langstaff Road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road.

Attachments

1. Location Map

Report prepared by

Andrew Pearce, Development Supervisor, Engineering Planning & Studies, ext 8235
Brendan Holly, Senior Manager Development/Transportation Engineering, ext 8250

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)

Regional Councillor Frustaglio declared an interest with respect to the foregoing matter as her property backs onto Langstaff Road, and did not take part in the discussion or vote on the matter.

ATTACHMENT No. 1



ATTACHMENT NO. 2

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WIDENING AND RECONSTRUCTION - LANGSTAFF ROAD
WESTON ROAD TO ISLINGTON AVENUE
PROJECT 9726 - VAUGHAN

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends:

1. the presentation by Paul Jankowski, Director of Transportation Design & Construction Branch be received;
2. the following communications be received:
 - a) Barbara G. Cole, Woodbridge resident, April 30, 2001; and
 - b) L. C. Angelantoni, representing Wycliffe Ratepayers Association, April 30, 2001;
3. the following deputations and/or written submissions be received:
 - a) Mrs. Franca Stirpe, Woodbridge resident and written submission;
 - b) Mr. Andy Sampogna, representing the Islington Woods Community Association, Woodbridge;
 - c) Councillor Gino Rosati, Ward 2, City of Vaughan;
 - d) Mr. L. C. Angelantoni, representing the Wycliffe Ratepayers Association;
 - e) Ms. Sonia Liscio, Woodbridge resident;
 - f) Councillor Bernie Di Vona, Ward 3, City of Vaughan; and
 - g) Mrs. Nadia Magarelli, President, Weston Downs Ratepayers Association, Woodbridge;
4. the recommendations contained in the following report, March 21, 2001, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works be adopted, subject to the addition of Recommendation 3 as follows:
 - "3. Staff be directed to proceed with the preparation of one contract, to be tendered in 2002, for the widening and re-construction of Langstaff Road, subject to the work being constructed in the following stages:

Stage 1:
The widening and re-construction of Langstaff Road from Islington Avenue to Pine Valley Drive, and site preparation work between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road, to proceed first; and,

Stage 2:

The widening and re-construction of Langstaff Road from Pine Valley Drive to Weston Road, to commence after Stage 1 and after the widening and re-construction of Rutherford Road between Highway 27 and Weston Road.*

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the solution recommended in the Environmental Study Report for a five-lane urban section and direct staff to complete and file an Environmental Study Report addendum to reflect the recent public consultation and to address the issues raised in the bump-up requests for Langstaff Road.
2. Staff be directed to review the potential for advancing the programming of the widening of Major Mackenzie Drive between Highway 27 and Weston Road as part of the preparation of the 2002 budget and business plan.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Committee and Council on activities undertaken by Regional staff regarding the Langstaff Road project since the filing of the Environmental Study Report (ESR). Following the filing, the Ministry of Environment (MOE) received several bump-up requests and in response the Region carried out additional public consultation. Regional staff now recommend completing an addendum to the original ESR document and requesting the Minister of the Environment (the Minister) to consider the original ESR, the addendum, and the bump-up requests and respond.

2. BACKGROUND

The Class EA for Langstaff Road from Islington Avenue to Weston Road (*Attachment 1*) was initiated in 1998 to identify the optimum improvements to Langstaff Road within the study area. The primary purpose for undertaking the study was to address the perceived need for additional east-west capacity.

Currently, Langstaff Road is a two-lane, rural road between Islington Avenue and Weston Road. Langstaff Road provides a link from Islington Avenue and the adjacent residential areas to Highway 400. A significant volume of traffic makes a southbound to eastbound left turn in the morning peak period at the intersection of Islington Avenue and Langstaff Road. This traffic makes its way to Highway 400 directly from Langstaff or to Highway 407 via Pine Valley Drive. Several roads in the immediate area are planned to be widened to accommodate current and future traffic demands. These roads include Highway 7 – Highway 27 to Pine Valley Drive, Rutherford Road – Highway 27

to Weston Road, Islington Avenue – Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive, and Highway 27 – Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive (*Attachment 2*).

2.1 Langstaff Public Consultation During Class EA Process

The public consultation process followed by the Region of York for the Langstaff Road Class EA met and exceeded the requirements for projects of this type. The main elements of the Region's process included:

- Agency Notification
- Public Notification
- Public Consultation Centres (two)
- Attendance at Weston Downs Ratepayers Association Meeting
- Notice of Completion of the ESR

In addition to the above consultation with the public, information was exchanged with the public and agencies on an ongoing basis throughout the study process. Response letters were provided to those members of the public and agencies that specifically requested one. Information packages and plans were provided on request. The Region's consultant randomly contacted members of the public who were to have received personal invitations to the PCC to ensure they had received it. Information packages and questionnaires were faxed to those who were interested. Some members of the public who were unable to attend the PCCs and who contacted the Region's consultant prior to the PCC were invited to view the study information at the consultant's office.

2.1.1 Agency Notification

Letters were sent to commenting agencies announcing the project initiation and outlining the purpose, schedule and contact persons for the project. Notification letters requested comments and invited review agencies to attend the two Public Consultation Centres (PCC).

2.1.2 Public Notification

The public was notified about the project by newspaper notices published in the Vaughan Liberal and by special invitation. 250 copies of the notice were sent to residents whose property fronts or backs onto Langstaff Road and to municipal staff, councillors, individuals on the project contact list and external agencies.

2.1.3 Public Consultation Centres

Two Public Consultation Centres (PCC) were held at the Vaughan Memorial Arena in Woodbridge at the northwest corner of Highway 7 and Islington Avenue. The first PCC was held on May 25, 1999 and the second PCC was held on October 15, 1999.

The objectives of the first PCC were to specifically define user/stakeholder preferences and sensitivities and to develop an understanding of the community's expectations and the role of Langstaff Road. The PCC was attended by 36 people and 26 comment sheets were received. Discussions with the attendees and review of the comments received generally indicated the need for the project and focused on issues such as noise, posted speed in the corridor, and pedestrian and vehicular safety.

The objectives of the second PCC were to assess the alternatives to the proposed road improvements and to present the alternative design concepts for implementing the preferred solution. The second PCC was attended by 21 people and 19 comment sheets were received. There was general recognition of the need to widen the section of Langstaff Road between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road. However, concerns remained regarding noise, posted speed in the corridor and design related issues such as sidewalks and centre medians.

2.1.4 Attendance at Weston Downs Ratepayers Association Meeting

The Region's consultant attended a community meeting held by the Weston Downs Ratepayers Association (WDRA) following the first PCC in June 1999. The issue of the proposed Langstaff Road improvements was discussed. Some concern was raised with respect to pedestrian safety and the speed limit in the corridor.

2.1.5 Notice of Completion of the ESR

The Notice of Completion of the ESR was advertised in the Vaughan Liberal on January 13 and 16, 2000. The notice identified that the completed ESR was on file with the Region of York Clerk's Department, the City of Vaughan Clerk's Department, the Ansley Grove Public Library and the Ministry of the Environment for a 30-day review period.

Four requests were made to the Minister to "bump-up" the Class EA to an Individual EA. One of the bump-up requests was from the City of Vaughan Council.

2.2 Supplemental Public Consultation

As a result of the requests received for bumping-up the Class EA, the Region scheduled a third PCC to review the concerns raised. The PCC was held on March 8, 2000 at St. John Bosco School in Woodbridge. It was agreed that a group representing concerned citizens would be set up to meet with Regional staff and work towards some consensus on widening Langstaff Road.

On April 4, 2000 Transportation and Works Committee directed staff to request a deferral from the Minister in dealing with the bump-up requests pending additional consultation with community representatives. Staff were further directed to meet with a representative group of concerned citizens of the area. The first meeting of the Citizens Group took place on May 10, 2000. The second meeting took place on January 16, 2001. Both meetings were held at St. John Bosco School.

At the first Citizens Group, staff reviewed the traffic considerations leading to the solution outlined in the ESR. This review included looking at the existing traffic information, 2001 traffic forecasts, 2011 traffic forecasts and the nature of trips on Langstaff Road. Following the presentation by the Region, the members were able to participate in a question and answer period. The main issues heard by Regional staff included:

- Defer the construction of Langstaff Road until widenings of Rutherford Road and Major Mackenzie Drive between Highway 27 and Weston Road have been completed.
- Do not widen Langstaff Road but eliminate the ditches, put additional landscaping in the corridor, add sidewalks and bike paths.

- Make operational improvements at signalized intersections.
- Construct Pine Valley Drive from Langstaff Road to Rutherford Road.

Regional staff agreed to look at the issues raised by the Citizens Group and report back to the group with alternatives.

3. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

On January 16, 2001, the Citizens Group met again with Regional staff to review the alternatives developed in response to the previous comments. Members of the Group were presented with the alternatives together with a review of the advantages and disadvantages of each option. The remainder of the meeting centred on a question and answer period.

3.1 Regional Official Plan Objectives

The Regional Official Plan identifies objectives that define the importance of the Regional road network. These objectives as stated in Section 6.1 of the Regional Official Plan are:

- To plan and protect street and road corridors so that they can be developed in a manner that is supportive of the future urban and rural structure of York Region and that can accommodate future transportation demands.
- To ensure that roads are improved in a manner that is supportive of all modes of transportation including walking, cycling, automobile, transit and truck and that minimizes conflicts between these different modes.
- To increase the total person-carrying and goods-carrying capability of the Regional street and road network in a manner that is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of this plan.

3.2 The Alternatives Presented to the Citizens Group

The alternatives were presented to address the comments that the widening of Langstaff Road is not required nor wanted by the community. The technically preferred solution identified in the ESR is a five-lane urban section. Alternatives to the technically preferred solution presented to the Citizens Group were:

- Urban, two-lane section with turning lanes at intersections;
- Urban, three-lane section with a continuous left turn lane;
- Urban, five-lane section with painted auxiliary lanes;
- Rural, two-lane section with turning lanes at intersections;
- Rural, three-lane section with a continuous left turn lane.

The two-lane alternatives involve no pavement widening, wider usable boulevards and minimal impact to the existing landscaping. For the urban option, the ditches are removed and curb, gutter and storm sewers are added. The disadvantages of the two-lane alternatives are that the road capacity issue is not satisfied, these alternatives do not conform to the Regional Official Plan

objectives for Regional roads, they involve construction disruption for little overall gain, and optimum lane geometrics are not achieved.

The 3-lane alternatives entail minor pavement widening, wider boulevards, optimal lane geometrics, and minimal impact to the existing landscaping. For the urban alternative, the existing ditch system is replaced with curb, gutter and storm sewers. The drawbacks to the 3-lane alternatives are that the road capacity issue is not addressed, they do not conform to the Regional Official Plan objectives for Regional roads and therefore again, there would be construction disruption for little overall gain.

The urban five-lane section with painted auxiliary lanes conforms to the full width pavement as proposed in the ESR technically preferred solution. However, for this alternative, the pavement would be painted to identify only one through lane in each direction with additional auxiliary lanes. The auxiliary lanes could be used to accommodate bicycle traffic. This alternative allows for construction of the full five-lane pavement width. However, the actual road capacity would only be realized once the auxiliary lanes are removed. The main advantage of this alternative is that construction impacts would only be incurred once, and it could easily be converted to the technically preferred solution. The disadvantage of this alternative is that it introduces the potential for unsafe driving behaviours.

3.3 Citizens Group Issues

Members of the Group voiced two main opinions. Some members of the Citizens Group continued to have concerns that the widening of Langstaff Road, particularly between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road, was not justified. Other members expressed their concerns about the impacts to the road network if the Region did not proceed with the full widening of Langstaff Road from Weston Road through to Islington Avenue. Opinions ranged from not needing Langstaff widened at all to deferring the widening until other roads have been completed, to widening a number of roads immediately including roads not under the jurisdiction of the Region of York.

3.3.1 Widen Other Roads First and Defer Langstaff Road

There was considerable discussion around the priorities of the Regional road projects. Group members opposed to the widening questioned why Langstaff needed to be widened to accommodate traffic from north and west of Langstaff Road. They contended that roads such as Rutherford Road and Major Mackenzie Drive should be widened first. Then, the members argued that the Region could monitor the congestion levels on all three roads and determine whether Langstaff Road still requires widening. Group members favourable to widening Langstaff and those concerned about overall lack of arterial road capacity in the area, also supported widening other area roads such as Rutherford Road and Major Mackenzie Drive.

Staff Comment

Rutherford Road is scheduled for construction this year. This project includes widening to four lanes plus turn lanes at intersections. The Region currently does not have Major Mackenzie Drive scheduled in the Ten-Year Roads Construction Program. In the longer-range plan, this corridor is intended to be added to the construction program. If the Region were to advance this project into the program, an Environmental Assessment would need to be initiated and funding of \$10 - 15

million would need to be programmed, necessitating a reprioritization of the current Ten-Year Roads Construction Program. Regional experience indicates that the Class EA planning, design, and property acquisition process takes approximately five years to complete. Therefore, advancing Major Mackenzie Drive in the program would not yield any immediate benefit to the travelling public. Regional staff could initiate a review of Major Mackenzie Drive programming as part of the next budget and business planning cycle for 2002.

It should be noted that the Regional roads must be viewed as a complete system. Deferring the widening of Langstaff Road will place additional traffic demand on other Regional roads. The other Regional roads in this area also require widening to accommodate current and future traffic demands. Projected volumes on the Regional roads will be close to the projected road capacity once the scheduled road improvements are complete. In short, even with these other Regional road corridor improvements, widening Langstaff Road is required to accommodate east-west capacity in the network.

3.3.2 Construct the Pine Valley Drive Link

Several members of the Group raised the issue of constructing the Pine Valley Drive link between Langstaff Road and Rutherford Road. Members greatly emphasized that this link is crucial to resolving the congestion in this area. They felt that Pine Valley Drive is a vital link to Highway 407. The Region was asked to ensure this link is pushed through and constructed. Regional staff explained that Pine Valley Drive between Langstaff Road and Rutherford Road is under the jurisdiction of the City of Vaughan.

Staff Comment

The City has recently undertaken a study to review the impacts of not completing the Pine Valley Drive link. City staff in attendance at the meeting indicated that the study results together with an Environmental Audit of the corridor would be presented to City of Vaughan Council. City staff have since advised that City of Vaughan Council is supportive of proceeding with a Class EA for the extension of the Pine Valley Drive link.

3.3.3 Carry Out Operational Improvements

Despite the difference of opinion regarding whether to defer the Langstaff Road widening altogether, there was consensus from the Group members that operational improvements on Langstaff Road would be beneficial. These improvements include longer left turn lanes at intersections, adjustments to the signal timing to permit more green time to the side streets and possibly add advanced green signals at local road intersections. Some members acknowledged that these improvements would be part of the full scale widening while others felt these improvements would be adequate.

Staff Comment

Regional staff agree that operational improvements such as lengthening turn lanes would provide some relief to Langstaff Road by moving left turning vehicles into queues without impeding the through traffic. Similarly, adding an advanced green phase to the traffic signals during certain times of the day can assist in moving left turning vehicles through the queues.

3.3.4 Enhance Corridor Landscaping, Add Sidewalks and Bike Paths

A number of people raised the issue of incorporating sidewalks, bike paths and enhanced landscaping in the Langstaff Road corridor. Additionally, there were requests to either eliminate the ditches entirely or make them less deep. In response, several members expressed their view that the corridor should not simply be beautified without addressing the issues of congestion and road capacity.

Staff Comment

Enhancing the corridor landscaping, including sidewalks and bike paths are issues that will be addressed during the detailed design phase in consultation with the area municipality. The Region will be consulting with the City of Vaughan regarding general sidewalk locations (north side, south side, both sides), the need or desire to include bike paths, and plans for enhanced landscaping.

3.3.5 Install Noise Attenuation Features

Noise issues were raised by members expressing their concern over the different levels of noise attenuation currently present for the Langstaff Road corridor. Subdivisions of various ages required differing noise attenuation measures as the land was developed. The attenuation varies from none to board fences to some landscaping to acoustic walls. The main issue was for fair treatment for all residents abutting the Langstaff Road with respect to noise attenuation.

Staff Comment

Through the Class EA process, noise levels were reviewed and analyzed. Noise attenuation measures are considered by comparing the difference between the existing and future-do-nothing versus the difference between the existing and future widening projected noise levels. Where the difference is less than five dBA, no noise mitigation is required. The conclusion of the noise analysis indicated that the greatest noise increase was 2.05 dBA. This is well below the requirement to consider noise mitigation measures.

Residents in areas where noise attenuation features do not currently exist or who wish to enhance the noise attenuation features, may petition Regional Council to have measures implemented under the provisions of the Local Improvement Act. The residents and ratepayer groups may initiate efforts seeking this Regional support.

3.3.6 Use Programmed Funds for Alternative Concepts

Citizen Group members raised the issue of whether funds would be available in the future for widening Langstaff Road if the project was deferred now. The other funding question to be considered is whether the Region would fund a project that was not in keeping with Regional objectives for Regional roads.

Staff Comment

In the event of a deferral of Langstaff Road, normal Regional practice would dictate that the funding allocated to this project would be reallocated to another priority.

Similarly, normal Regional practices would indicate that if the project was redefined to a point where it no longer meets Regional objectives, i.e. that the road remains functionally a local collector road,

the Region would look at prioritizing funding to address other needed road improvements elsewhere. For example, if the work identified for the Langstaff Road corridor was confined to replacement of the ditches with a storm sewer, installation of sidewalks and bike paths and enhanced landscaping, the priority of funding such improvements would have to be reassessed in consideration of other more significant corridor needs.

3.4 Class EA for Langstaff Road Meets Regional Road Objectives

Langstaff Road is a vital link in the Regional road network and crucial to the efficient and safe operation of traffic through the City of Vaughan. The Regional Official Plan designates Langstaff Road as a Regional road with a right-of-way width of up to 36 metres. This corridor currently meets the 36-metre width. The Region owns the property necessary to build the recommended five-lane cross-section within the existing 36-metre corridor. Since the late 1970s, the Region has actively sought road widenings along Langstaff Road as the subdivisions developed in anticipation of the need for future road capacity. In recognition of the importance of this inter- and intra-regional link, traffic growth, and to accommodate the growing population, Langstaff Road was scheduled for expansion in the Region's Ten-Year Roads Construction Program.

Failure to proceed with the technically preferred solution at this point will place additional traffic burden on other east-west arterial roads. This will continue to cause congestion on these routes. The increased congestion will result in more traffic infiltration in the residential areas, greater frustration for drivers leading to an increased potential for erratic driving, road rage behaviour and higher collision rates, longer periods where vehicles are stationary thereby increasing air pollution and an overall failing of the Regional road system in this area. The Region is making efforts to improve the road network through the widening of Highway 7, Highway 27, Islington Avenue, and Rutherford Road. Langstaff Road is key to completing the road system.

Regional staff have followed the intent of the Class EA planning process for Langstaff Road. Subsequent to filing the ESR and receiving the bump-up requests, staff have met with community members to further try to address their concerns. The prime objection is to widening the section of Langstaff Road from Pine Valley Drive to Weston Road. Much of the objection is from ratepayers on the north side of Langstaff Road that question the justification of the widening at all. Their arguments against the widening contend that if the road is widened, additional traffic will be introduced. The purpose of widening the road is to address the current congestion levels and to provide future capacity for projected traffic volumes. Traffic will continue to grow on all the Regional corridors as the population increases, as development approved under the Regional Official Plan continues, as motorists move from more congested roads to less congested roads, until there is a shift in live/work relationships, and until higher transit use is realized.

Widening Langstaff Road adheres to the Regional Official Plan objectives of:

- Developing road corridors in support of the future urban and rural structure at York Region;
- Accommodating future transportation demands;
- Ensuring roads are improved such that all modes of transportation (walking, cycling, automobile, truck and transit) are supported;
- Increasing the total person-carrying capability of the Regional road network.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Region hired Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited to carry out the Class EA for the Langstaff Road project. To date the Region has spent approximately \$250,000 in consultant fees on this project. Regional staff time has also been expended in taking this project from initiation to the filing of the ESR and in additional public consultation meetings. Additional costs will be incurred to complete the design for this project, however, staff will prepare the addendum to the ESR and those costs will be minimal.

The Region has budgeted \$200,000 in the 2001 Business Plan for utility relocation. An amount of \$4,471,000 has been budgeted for the entire construction project in 2001-3 funded 76.5% from Development charges and 23.5% from Tax Levy.

5. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The widening of Langstaff Road from Weston Road to Islington Avenue is required to address congestion and road capacity issues in the City of Vaughan. This link forms part of the Regional road network and cannot be viewed in isolation of the overall system. The implications of not widening this link include continued congestion, air pollution, increased driver stress and frustration with potential road rage behaviour, and the failure of the system to accommodate existing and future growth and traffic demand.

Conversely, community members immediate to the corridor are adamantly opposed to the road expansion. Rather, they support operational improvements to the corridor together with beautification efforts. These improvements would not address the key issue of road capacity.

City of Vaughan Council requested a bump-up of the Class EA to allow staff additional time to review the ESR. City Representatives have participated in the Citizens Group meetings. Additional time will be available to City staff for review of the ESR together with the Region's proposed addendum to the ESR.

6. CONCLUSION

The Region has completed the ESR for the widening of Langstaff Road and has adhered to the intent of the Class EA planning process. After the ESR was filed, bump-up requests were sent to the Minister of the Environment. Regional staff met with community members to try to address the concerns raised. Issues such as the need for the widening, increase in noise, including services such as sidewalks, bike paths and landscaping, operational improvements to the corridor were raised. The need and justification for the widening of Langstaff Road, noise related issues and operational improvements have been addressed through the Class EA process and the ESR and were reviewed with the Citizens Group. Issues such as sidewalks, bike paths, and landscaping are City of Vaughan responsibilities and can be coordinated in the Region's contract.

Staff recommendation is to proceed with the technically preferred solution for Langstaff Road as identified in the ESR. Staff should be directed to complete an addendum to the ESR in response to the issues raised by community members in the bump-up requests. Regional staff should submit

that the ESR, the addendum and any other information required, to the Minister, so that the bump-up requests may be evaluated. Regional staff should obtain the detailed comments from the City of Vaughan staff.

This report has been reviewed by the Senior Management Group.

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing has been forwarded to each Member of Council with the May 2, 2001, Transportation and Works Committee agenda and a copy thereof is on file in the Office of the Regional Clerk.)

(Regional Councillor Frustaglio declared an interest in the foregoing Clause due to the fact that her property abuts Langstaff Road and did not take part in the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, this item at the Regional Council meeting on May 10, 2001.)