

Maine Turnpike Authority

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October 9, 2008

Michael L. Estes
4 Carrie Lynne Lane
York, ME 03909

Dear Chairman Estes:

Recognizing the significant local concern regarding the Maine Turnpike Authority's consideration of options to replace the York Toll Plaza, I am writing to update you on the progress of the ongoing study.

As you know, the preliminary study conducted by the Maine Turnpike Authority's general engineering consultant (GEC) eliminated the existing plaza location from consideration; because, in their analysis, the site could not be configured to comply with national highway safety guidelines without incurring extraordinary costs and environmental impacts. However, at the urging of the York Board of Selectman, the Board of the Turnpike Authority asked its GEC to conduct a more detailed investigation of the existing location and to report back on how the identified safety, environmental and cost obstacles might be addressed to make the existing site feasible.

The GEC has recently informed the Board that due to the complexity of the issues involved, additional time will be required to complete the study. In fairness, it should also be noted that due to recent unprecedented economic and financial conditions, the Turnpike Authority has placed additional demands on the GEC to assist in the review and revision of the Turnpike's upcoming ten year capital plan.

Knowing that the Board of Selectman, the citizens of York and the Board of the Turnpike Authority all want the information to be as thorough, complete and conclusive as possible, we have granted additional time for this study. We now expect the GEC's report to be finalized and ready for consideration during the first quarter of 2009.

Please understand that this study remains one of the Authority's top priorities and that we are most interested in expediting its completion. Yet, we strongly believe that it is in everyone's interest to ensure that the final product is thorough, complete and informative.

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You will be interested to know that as part of the comprehensive investigation of the existing location, the GEC has performed additional analysis with respect to the appropriate and necessary size of the proposed plaza. As you are aware, the GEC presented a conservative or "worst case" plaza size early in the planning stages, knowing that the size would likely be reduced in later stages and through the normal project minimization process required by the Authority and the environmental permitting agencies. However, to assure the most accurate assessment of the existing location, the GEC thought it best to expedite the analysis of traffic capacity needs and appropriate plaza size.

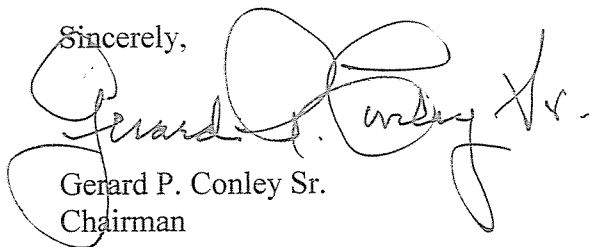
While this project design process is not yet complete, the GEC has advised the Board that they are likely to recommend a significantly smaller plaza than the 21 lane plaza originally presented. According to the GEC, the potential exists to reduce the size of the plaza to 5 northbound lanes, 6 southbound lanes and 4 highway speed lanes in the center of the plaza, making the overall plaza just 15 lanes. The details of this downsizing are still being investigated; but if feasible, it will obviously reduce the impacts of the plaza from a community, environmental and cost perspective. This is good news, because, as I have stated, it is my sincere desire to find a solution that does not involve the acquisition of any homes and minimizes the need to acquire privately owned land.

Those experienced with the exhaustive project development process were not surprised to learn that it may result in a smaller footprint and reduced impacts. This is the normal course of development for projects of this nature. Nevertheless, I was pleased to hear that such progress is being made. And while I know that this information alone will not resolve your concerns about the project, I thought you, your fellow selectmen and residents of York would appreciate knowing that the additional time and effort invested in this study is serving to reduce both its community and environmental impacts and its costs.

I look forward to receiving the completed GEC report and will contact you to arrange a joint meeting of the MTA Board and York Board of Selectmen as soon as it becomes available.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerard P. Conley Sr.", written over a circular stamp or mark.

Gerard P. Conley Sr.
Chairman

CC: York Board of Selectmen
Robert Yandow, Town Manager