

COLLEGE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
AUGUST 3, 1984
2:00 P.M.

A Special Meeting was called to order by Chairman Dolores Taricani on Friday, August 3, 1984, at 2:25 p.m. in the College Township Municipal Building.

Members present: Max E. Hartswick, Fred E. Smith, Herbert W. Stewart, Dolores A. Taricani - Chairman

Member absent: Gale L. Dargitz

Others present: C. Thomas Lechner - Township Manager
Beulah L. Houser - Administrative Assistant
J. Doyle Corman - State Senator
Ruth C. Rudy - State Representative
Dennis Elpern - Director of Centre Regional Planning
Thomas C. Ickes - P.E., PennDOT District 2-0 Manager

The Chairman opened the meeting by introducing those seated at the Council table and then stated the purpose of the meeting was to gather information since Council did not realize that Section 6, the Eastern Section of the Bypass, was let out for bids until a week ago.

Taricani asked Dennis Elpern, Director of Centre Regional Planning Commission, to summarize the Bypass's history, and Elpern explained that the completion of the Bypass has been given highest priority over the last 10 years but had been "on the scene" for at least 20 years. Because of the cost and the magnitude of the project, the Bypass was constructed in stages with the two ends completed first.

The Western section is scheduled for completion this year, he said. The Park Avenue Extension will be completed in September. With that part finished, only the Eastern Section and the two Interchanges - Waddle Road and East College Avenue - are left to be constructed.

Elpern went on to say that over a year ago the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) developed a list of transportation projects to be funded in the Region. The Waddle Road Interchange was added at that time. The Interchange at East College Avenue was not deleted, but it was recommended that if funding was not sufficient to accomplish the projects on the 12-Year Plan, it could be deferred in order to have enough funding to complete the Eastern Section.

At the last MPO meeting in May, the Interchange with East College Avenue was added again and given high priority -- as was the Eastern Section. That listing has been given to the State to be reviewed and finalized by the State Department of Transportation.

*See Attachment *1
for Clarification
from PennDOT*

ATTACHMENT

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1. Welcome and introduce our invited guests.
2. History of the Bypass -- maps - Dennis Elpern
3. Council's position why we have requested the meeting and review of questions concerning Council.
 - a. How was Section 6 of the State College Bypass bid and the bid awarded, when this Section was not even on the first part of the Four-Year Plan?
 - b. How will PennDOT handle the re-routing of traffic? How long do you anticipate that traffic will have to be re-routed? Will you construct a run-around or try to take the traffic through Lemont?
 - c. We realize that an environmental impact study has been done - does this study specifically deal with the construction of Section 6 and the possibility that the interchange may never be built?
 - d. What will the traffic level be at the intersection of the Bypass and East College Avenue -- level A, B, etc.
 - e. Have you seriously studied the economics which could be realized at this stage of construction by consolidation, modification of present plans such as:
 - since the Bypass is a "local road", reduce the cost of signing which is presently \$1,500,000
 - use a black top shoulder instead of concrete (a new PennDOT requirement) as you did on the other Section of the Bypass. Why change now if you can reduce the cost?
 - while we support the concept of a bike path, we do not feel that a bike path is nearly as important to the safety and welfare of our community as is the interchange and the bridge
 - do you have specific cost estimates on the additional expense involved by earth moving operations being duplicated, utility relocation possibility twice, and certain other construction elements which will have to be repeated?
 - the Clover Highlands Development will have to pay for the installation of traffic signals. Since the condemnation or settlement for the value of lands taken has not been settled, a savings could be realized here if the developer does not have to install signals
 - have you considered the significant increases in cost due to inflation over the next twelve years?
 - f. We urge you to effect changes which will provide you with additional funds, these funds added to the inflation figures would probably permit you to build the interchange for half of your estimated figure of \$3,345,000. It is critical that you go back and reconsider all of the aspects of Section 6 and the East College Avenue interchange.

In the meantime, the Eastern Section has been let out for bids with construction to be started this month. Elpern added that action froze \$9 Million Dollars of PennDOT Funds, and he said he hoped the East College Avenue Interchange could be coordinated with Section 6. When it is completed, the story of the Bypass would become history.

Taricani then read a list of questions defined by Council as their principal areas of concern and asked that PennDOT not proceed until they had been considered. (A copy of the list is attached.) The Chairman added that Council felt there was no intention of finishing the Bypass (the East College Avenue Interchange). The two ends would be brought together at grade with East College Avenue and that would conclude the entire project. However, she said, under the illusion that the Interchange would still be built, people in that vicinity could not develop their land and East College Avenue would continue to exist at over-capacity levels.

When Council members' views and questions were requested, Stewart asked Tom Songer, Uni-Tec Engineer, to comment on PennDOT's plans and the duplications involved in constructing the Eastern Section separately from the Interchange.

Songer, whose Firm represents the proposed Clover Highlands PRD of 300 dwelling units near the Bypass, said that if the Bypass bridge structure were not completed, traffic flow in and out of their development would be inhibited. He added there was no other way to give main access to Clover Highlands except via Clover Road near one of the ramps, and Songer was concerned about the number of traffic lights in that short stretch of highway.

Asked by Taricani if the developer of the PRD would consider signalization in the condemnation of land settlement, Songer replied that the final settlement would likely come before a Board of Review and his clients would consider the traffic light with the final negotiations.

As for the question of if the Interchange should be constructed simultaneously with the Eastern Section, Songer replied that it definitely should and added that since traffic would have to be re-routed for sewer relocation anyway, that would be the best time to complete the bridge.

With no other questions from Council, Taricani asked Thomas Ickes, PennDOT District Manager, to answer their concerns.

Ickes said PennDOT held public hearings on the Bypass in 1980, besides doing an Environmental Impact Study. PennDOT knew it didn't have the \$25 Million Dollar Funding to construct the highway at one time so instead it identified five separate projects or stages for it to be built: 1. the Western Section, 2. the Eastern Section, 3. the Waddle Road Interchange, 4. the East College Avenue Interchange, and 5. the Park Avenue Extension.

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Ickes emphasized that for the local officials to have the greatest impact on communicating their ideas, they should testify at the Public Hearings which the State Transportation Commission will hold in the months ahead.

Ickes then answered the questions on Council's list of concerns as follows:

- a. How was Section 6 let out for bid when it was not on the first four-year plan?

Ickes answered that since PennDOT could not proceed on all the projects on the 12-year plan at one time, the list was broken down into blocks of four years. The four-year plan was strictly an in-house device to manage construction in an organized approach. Ickes continued that when they started the section under construction now, PennDOT realized they should complete the acquisition for the entire Bypass. The principal determinant for its approval was the Five (5¢) Cents increase in gasoline tax, which gave PennDOT the increased funding.

- b. How and how long would traffic be re-routed for construction of Section 6?

Ickes said traffic would be detoured onto Pike Street in Lemont for most of a year since Elmwood Street must be raised for the Bypass to go under. (The contractor has until August 1986 to complete the Eastern Section.)

Taricani stressed that Pike Street was already a very busy thoroughfare and additional traffic will cause severe problems.

Before Section 6 is begun, Ickes said, they would hold a Town Meeting to inform the residents exactly what would be done.

As for re-routing traffic for East College Avenue, which must be raised six or seven feet, Ickes said a temporary roadway to the side of the highway would be built.

Asked by a member in the audience where the traffic coming off the Bypass would go with the Interchange not constructed, Ickes answered that it was possible the traffic would filter through Lemont but if it became a problem PennDOT would address the issue.

- c. Did the Environmental Impact Study focus on Section 6 and did it address the impact of an unconstructed interchange?

Ickes said the Study did address the impact from the Eastern Section; the Study did not consider that the Interchange would not be built.

Taricani asked if it considered that it would not be built for 12 years?

Ickes replied, no.

*more info
for residents
from PennDOT.*

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Ickes emphasized that for the local officials to have the greatest impact on communicating their ideas, they should testify at the Public Hearings which the State Transportation Commission will hold in the months ahead.

Taricani stated that a highway coming in at grade with East College Avenue is a very serious impact.

Ickes replied again, even IF this Interchange were completed, there will be large amounts of traffic at the signalized intersections. Very little percentage-wise will be removed by completion of the Interchange. He went on to say that only 2,000 to 3,000 cars per day will pass under East College Avenue compared to the 25,000 cars per day using East College Avenue at this time.

Approximately 1,000 cars per day will be coming off the one ramp and 1,500 off the other, but those are vehicles which are using Porter Road and University Drive now. The traffic on the State College side of the ramps on East College Avenue is projected to drop by 4,000 to 5,000 cars per day; traffic on the Nittany Mall side of the ramps will stay about the same. He emphasized that East College Avenue is the traffic generator.

- * 9 d. What will be the traffic level at the Intersection of the Bypass and East College Avenue?

Ickes answered "C" level -- traffic flowing relatively smoothly but with some congestion at peak hours. Ickes reminded the audience that East College Avenue will be a five-lane highway with the center lane for left-hand turning movements.

- * 6 e. Have you considered the economics realized by consolidation and modification of present plans in regards to:

1. Signing at \$1,500,000. Ickes replied the funding is not currently available for signing but the highway is a major traffic generator with many people unfamiliar with the area. Taricani countered that Ickes had just said use of the road would be minimal, but that people using it would be accustomed to high speed highways. She said transition to East College Avenue from the Bypass would be abrupt. Ickes retorted that the design was a normal interchange with time to decelerate down the ramps. Signing would help and it stays on the list.
2. Black-Top Shoulders vs. Concrete. Ickes stated that in the long range concrete shoulders are less expensive because of less maintenance and fewer repair costs.
3. Bike Paths. Ickes said this area has more bicycles per square mile than any area in the State. He added that PennDOT had worked with the MPO in planning the bike paths, and he felt they were doing the right thing. He added the percentage of the cost of the bike path was very small compared to the total Bypass cost. The Federal Highway Administration was subsidizing its cost by 75 percent.

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4. Duplication of Earth Moving, Utility Relocation and Other Construction Elements. Ickes agreed there would be some duplication such as curbing and other construction when East College Avenue is raised. There should be no duplication in relocating utilities, he said.
5. Signalization at Clover Highlands PRD. If traffic levels could be decreased on East College Avenue with the construction of the Interchange, the developer would not have to install traffic signals. Ickes replied that there would be no difference in traffic affecting Clover Road by the Interchange being built or not. The traffic level would remain about the same. He also said PennDOT would not tie something like signalization to a right-of-way settlement.
6. Inflation and the Increased Cost of Delaying Construction of the Interchange. Inflation is a factor, said Ickes, but added there was not "money in the bank" to build it all at once.

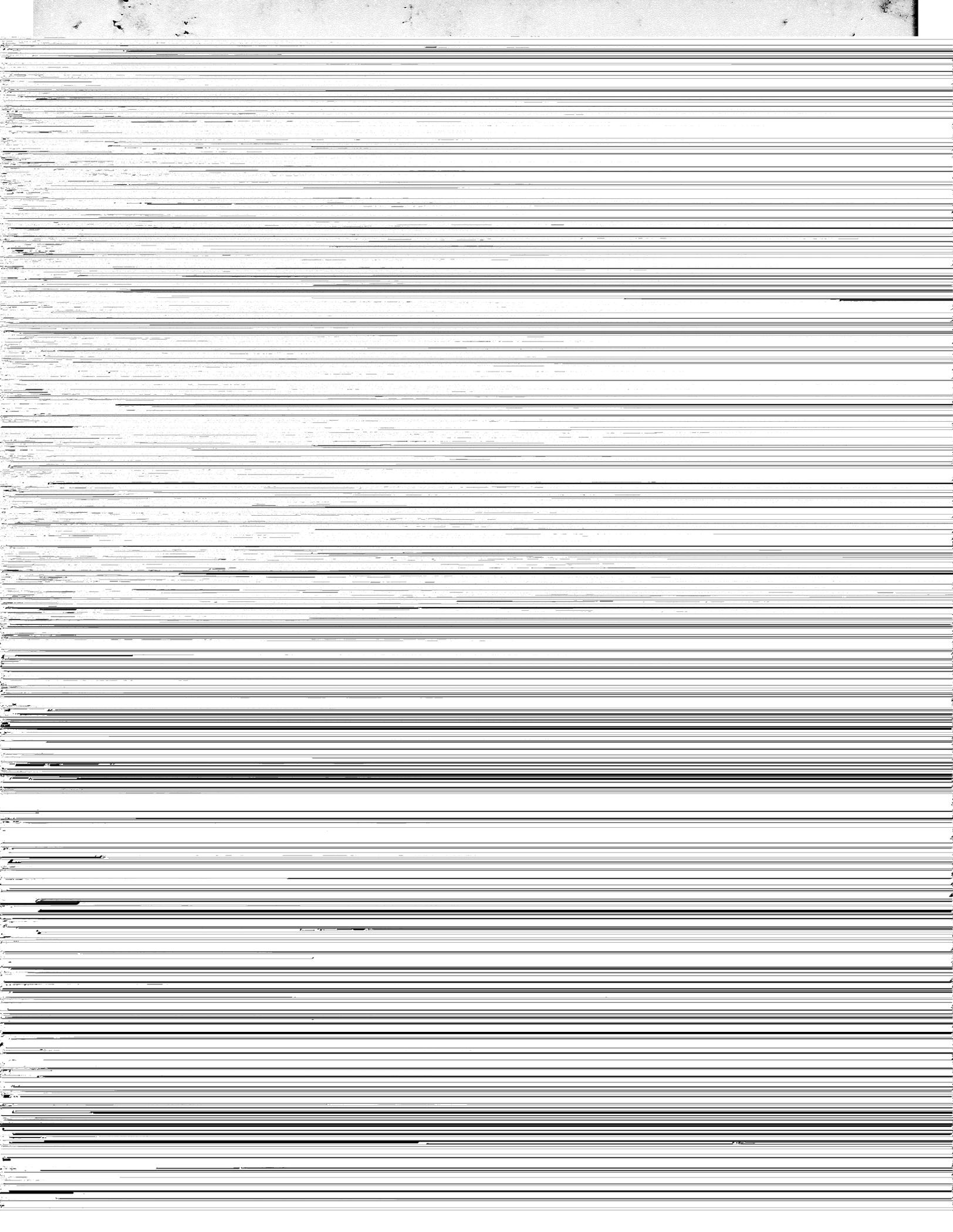
The discussion then turned to questions from the audience with John Ziegler saying the original projected traffic estimates for the Bypass was 20,000 cars per day. Taricani said her fact sheet (a recent one) said 5,000. Ickes cited figures of 8,000 cars per day on the East end of the Bypass and up to 12,000 on the West end. He also mentioned the ramps accommodating up to 5,000 cars per day.

When Ron Weis, Chairman of the Planning Commission, asked how traffic would be managed when Branch Road would be raised for the Bypass, Ickes replied that a temporary road would be constructed.

A woman who lived near Puddintown Road was concerned over the poor road design and high traffic levels (on Puddintown Road) because of Clover Highlands' second access. Ickes said PennDOT needs to meet with the Township to see what improvements can be made. It's a joint responsibility, he said.

Ziegler broached the subject of when the Waddle Road Interchange was planned, and Ickes stated it was considered back when the right-of-way was acquired. Later Taricani asked Ickes to explain the bidding on the Waddle Road Interchange.

Ickes said PennDOT expected the Waddle Road Interchange to be bid in 1984. Since they needed a year for a consultant to design it, it would be two years before it was built. He said that PennDOT has committed \$475,000 for the construction of the Waddle Road Interchange and the local area was working toward obtaining \$800,000 (\$300,000 in Local contributions and \$500,000 in Grants). That made \$10,475,000 available for the Eastern Section and the Waddle Road Interchange. PennDOT decided then to bid alternatives as follows:



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Taricani stated they wanted to see design on the Interchange begun very soon so that it could be built as the Eastern Section was nearing completion.

Ickes replied that he would relay those thoughts to Secretary of Transportation Thomas Larson. He emphasized again not to neglect attending the Public Hearings this fall.

Elpern added the Interchange had been recommended by the MPO and the District. All that remained was a lobbying effort which they intended to undertake.

The meeting concluded at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Thomas Lechner
Secretary

CTL:jh:bh

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

*Attachment to minutes
of Special meeting held 8/3/84
at 2:00 p.m.*



IN REPLY REFER TO

1924-30 Daisy Street
Clearfield, Pennsylvania
Telephone: (814) 765-5361
August 23, 1984

Ms. Dolores A. Taricani, Chairman
College Township Council
1481 East College Avenue
State College, Pennsylvania 16801

Dear Ms. Taricani:

Thank you for a copy of the Special Meeting Minutes of College Township Council addressing the issue of the East College Avenue Interchange with the State College Bypass.

We question several points in the minutes and would like to offer the following clarifications:

*¹ 1. Page 1

The East College Avenue Interchange was deferred by the MPO for the Waddle Road Interchange and the improvement to the intersection of Science Park Road and Traffic Route 26. It was not deferred to build the Eastern Section of the Bypass.

*² 2. Page 3

With the completion of the eastern section of the Bypass, through traffic using the bypass would exit at the interchange ramp at East College Avenue, cross College Avenue, enter the on ramp, and continue to their destination on the Bypass. Traffic will not exit the Bypass and filter through Lemont once the eastern section of the Bypass is completed.

*³ 3. Page 6

I did not state that PennDOT would raise an additional \$210,000 toward the Waddle Road Interchange.

RECEIVED

AUG 23 1984

COLLEGE TOWNSHIP

Ms. Dolores A. Taricani, Chairman -2-
College Township Council
1481 East College Avenue
State College, Pennsylvania 16801

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* 4. Page 6

The correct name for the consultant conducting the 322/144 Comprehensive Traffic Analysis and Feasibility Study is RKK/Vollmer.

At the August ⁹nd meeting, there were two questions which I said would have to be researched before a reply could be given. The following are the replies to those questions.

- *-5 1. The level of service for the new traffic signals being placed on East College Avenue at the interchange ramps will be D+ and C.
- *-6 2. The question arose, "How much money would be saved if the East College Avenue Interchange would have been included in the construction with the eastern section of the Bypass?"

The only significant savings would be 200 feet of pavement and the traffic control barriers at the on and off ramps. All other work done on the eastern section of the bypass would be done regardless whether or not the interchange would be built.

We trust this clarifies the status of the East College Avenue Interchange with the Bypass.

Very truly yours,

Thomas C. Ickes

Thomas C. Ickes, P.E.
District Engineer
District 2-0