MAD RIVER ROAD and ALEX BELL INTERSECTION PROJECT
ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS / CONCERNS
Sept. 4, 2018

Question: Which roundabout alternative is selected?

Answer: Alternative 2A, as shown at the public meeting and on our website, is the Montgomery County Engineer’s preferred alternative. Given the input we have received from the public, we have decided that we will move forward with detailed design, as well as pursue funding for this roundabout. This roundabout (Alternative 2A) does not encroach into the pond on the north side of the intersection, or impact the springhouses or windmill located on that property. It does, however, require acquisition of the single-family residence on the south side of the intersection. The cost of acquisition of the residence is included in the cost estimate for the project.

Question: Is any information available on a website?

Answer: Yes. Information presented at the public meeting is available, such as the project brochure/frequently asked questions; power point presentation; video simulations of a roundabout operation, traffic signal operation, and existing four-way stop operation; and “how to drive a roundabout” brochure. Also included is an Exhibit of Alternate 2A. The link to the project information on the County Engineer’s website is:
http://www.mcohio.org/government/elected_officials/engineer/Alex_Bell_Mad_River_Notice.php

Comment: Roundabouts are confusing/People don’t know how to drive them

Response: Roundabouts are being built in many areas in Ohio, including Warren County and Butler County, which are adjacent to us. For example, the Butler County Engineer has built 14 roundabouts to date, and found that the rate of crashes dropped by 60 percent, and injury crashes have been reduced by 80%. Nationally, the Federal Highway Administration reports crash reductions of 35%, and reduction of injury crashes by 76%. The data in Ohio and across the nation shows that drivers are able to navigate roundabouts and do so much more safely.

Comment: Roundabouts are more expensive than a traffic signal.

Response: At this location, the estimated cost of construction, plus right of way acquisition, for a traffic signal installation including turn lanes is $1.8 million. The estimated cost of construction plus land acquisition for a roundabout is $1.5 million.
Question: Who will pay for the cost of the project?

Answer: The Montgomery County Engineer’s Office will apply for a grant of federal highway safety funds to cover approximately 80% of the cost. The remaining cost will likely come from a combination of Ohio Public Works Commission funds and Montgomery County Road User Fees.

Question: Has consideration been given to stationing a police officer to direct traffic during rush hours?

Answer: A police officer to direct traffic would have little impact on the congestion at the intersection because of all the turning movements. The crashes that occur within the space of the intersection itself might be reduced in number, but rear-end type crashes that occur as drivers encounter the queue will probably still occur. In addition, assignment of law enforcement personnel and associated costs are not under the County Engineer’s control and would likely result in much higher long-term costs.

Question: What environmental studies have been done? Are there any EPA findings?

Answer: An environmental screening of existing literature and data bases was done prior to the public meeting. There was nothing found that would prohibit pursuing a project at this location. However, as design of the project progresses, there will be an in-depth environmental review of the impacts of the project to any potential historic sites, wetlands, protected species, water quality, air quality, and other environmental concerns. The roundabout option must prove to be feasible to construct, and pass the environmental reviews, before proceeding to construction.

Comment: A roundabout should be as big as possible to allow easy movement and provide room for errant motorists. A larger roundabout, known as Alternate 2C, was presented at the public meeting on June 20.

Response: The modern roundabout is carefully designed to reduce operating speeds to about 20 mph. At the entrance to the roundabout, a raised island forces the motorist to slow down and positions the car at the proper angle for entrance. Once inside the roundabout, the difference between speeds of all vehicles should be no more than about 10 mph. The outside diameter of the roundabout should be no more than 150 feet, again to limit speed. Speed control is essential to the safe operation of a roundabout. Also, the width of the road within the roundabout should be 16 to 20 feet in order to keep the operation to single-lane traffic. A wider lane can encourage motorists to try and pass within a single-lane roundabout.

Question: How many lanes will be in the roundabout?

Answer: This will be a single-lane roundabout. It will have sufficient capacity for current traffic and projected future traffic.
Question: How long will construction take?
Answer: Construction of a roundabout should take about four months. It will probably be necessary to close both Mad River Road and Alex Bell Road at the intersection during construction. Building temporary pavement to maintain traffic would significantly impact the adjacent properties.

Question: Won’t traffic increase if you build either a roundabout or traffic signal?
Answer: Two major items dictate the traffic volume for a given road: land use and travel times. The land in this general area is nearly all developed, so there should not be any increase in traffic caused by further development. Moreover, we believe that the roundabout will not alter basic traffic patterns in the area because a decrease in the delay at this intersection, alone, should not attract new users to alter their existing routes.

Question: Won’t fog be a problem with a roundabout?
Answer: Street lighting will be provided to illuminate the roundabout.

Question: Why don’t you fix the intersection at Yankee Street and Mad River at the same time?
Answer: There have been significantly fewer crashes at the intersection of Yankee and Mad River than at Alex Bell and Mad River. Traffic back-up from Alex Bell and Mad River can extend past Yankee Street. By eliminating the long back-up, it should relieve some of the pressure at Yankee and Mad River. Once the intersection at Alex Bell and Mad River is improved, we can re-evaluate the Yankee and Mad River intersection. Also, we are going to post No Left Turn signs on Yankee Street to prohibit left turns onto Mad River Road. Right turns from Mad River Road onto Yankee Street are already prohibited.

Question: Can the project occur sooner than currently proposed?
Answer: Not likely. We plan to apply for federal funding to construct the project. Once we know if the project is approved for a federal grant, we can begin the project development process. The process includes hiring an engineering consulting firm, topographic and boundary surveys, preliminary engineering, environmental investigations, detailed design plans, right-of-way plans, obtaining rights-of-way, Ohio Department of Transportation reviews and approvals, and advertising for construction bids. The most likely year for construction to occur is 2024.

Question: Was the topography of the area considered in development of the alternatives presented at the public meeting?
Answer: Yes. Topography is a critical design element. Existing grades, slopes and profiles must all be evaluated. Proposed grades, slopes and profiles must meet design standards.