

## **US 70 Improvement Project – James City**

On January 16<sup>th</sup> representatives of the Taberna Community (Dick Stern, Robert Suva, Jen Toler and Tim Tabak – thank you all for your time and efforts to put together your summaries) attended a focus group meeting with representatives from NCDOT to review the status of the US 70 Project as it will impact the James City area. What follows is a summary of the meeting, and does not reflect the position or opinions of the HOA. More comprehensive information is available at [www.ncdot.gov/projects/US70\\_jamescity](http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/US70_jamescity). Soon, we will have more detailed information posted to the HOA web site at [www.tabernahoa.org](http://www.tabernahoa.org).

### **Current Design Concepts**

The improvements to US 70 are intended to handle traffic for the next 30 years and will do so with two lanes of highway through the James City sector. There will be fly-over interchanges (US 70 will fly-over) at Taberna Way and Thurman Road. US 70 will be raised for just over 1/2 mile to “fly over” each interchange., eliminating the need for traffic signals. NCDOT believes this will have a positive impact on noise levels as trucks will not brake and start up in response to traffic lights. There will also be interchanges at Williams Rd (Food Lion), Airport Rd, and Grantham Rd. Again, all these interchanges will travel under US 70 (US 70 and US17/MLK Blvd share this type of configuration. Taberna Way will be extended to Old Cherry Point Rd and this intersection will be controlled by a traffic signal. It is expected that Old Cherry Point Rd will become a through road avoiding the construction zone.

### **Impact to Taberna Residential Property and HOA Property**

Frankly, the details of the potential impacts are not 100% clear (at least to me). The conceptual design map (still a work in progress) shows that our entrance and potentially a portion of Taberna Townes that abuts Taberna Way could be impacted. Other residential properties are not within the “potential impact area.”

The Taberna Way entrance will be potentially impacted only up to the railroad tracks (not even the DOT wants to deal with railroad right of way issues). If needed, the Taberna entrance signs will be relocated at the HOA’s direction and at the State’s expense.

Sound (i.e., noise) studies are scheduled to begin next week and will determine the specific needs and locations of noise mitigation measures. The type of noise mitigation will be open to resident preferences so stay tuned. Noise impacts are expected to be highest during construction. Night construction was rejected due to noise levels and impacts to residents.

No Taberna land or property is under consideration for confiscation or eminent domain. No temporary relocations are anticipated during construction. If permanent relocation is deemed necessary, affected property owners will be notified and compensated.

### **Timing – “Subject to change”**

1. Thru May 2018: Preliminary planning, design, environmental impact studies (to include noise).
2. June 2018 thru January 2019: design to build / seek construction bids.
3. Summer 2018: community meeting with updated design maps.
4. February 2019: final design / procurement of property.

5. Late 2019, early 2020: first dirt to be moved.
6. Length of project: 42 months

### **Traffic Flow**

With the new configuration of Taberna Way, as you leave Taberna, and just over the railroad tracks, there will be an access road and a commanding view of the US 70 elevated bridge. To go north (towards New Bern and the new Dunkin Donuts entrance) take the access road to the left or take the access road to the right to go south (towards United Storage and the Nissan Dealership). If you continue straight and approaching the new bridge, a right turn will take onto US 70 south (towards Havelock) and on your left, will be traffic exiting from US 70. If you continue straight, going under US 70, the first left will take you onto US 70 north (towards New Bern) and on your right, will be the exiting traffic from US 70 south. Understand? This is all a lot clearer on the conceptual design map.

I encourage all residents to monitor the NCDOT website listed above. If you have questions or concerns that are not addressed above, you are welcome to send them to me and I will forward them to US 70 Community Out Reach manager. Keep in mind that this project is in the “conceptual phase” and things could change.

Bart Rovins  
President THOA