

## **Email Comments Received**

## **Widening of FM 2978 to Four Lanes From Dry Creek to FM 1488**

I am an elected Board Member of The Woodlands Township Board of Directors, one of seven (7). I am writing in support of a request by my constituents within the Montfair Neighborhood, The Village of Sterling Ridge. These residents own approximately fifty (50) homes adjacent to FM 2978. My comments are not intended to represent the views of my fellow Board Directors nor The Woodlands Township as a whole.

We understand the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) is in the process of updating its 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). One of the proposed projects being considered is for the widening of FM2978 to 4 lanes from Dry Creek to FM 1488 for a projected cost of \$9,986,400. The project is timed to start in 2015.

I have been working with these Montfair residents since the spring of 2011 to help them gain a better understanding of the proposed project and the potential impact it might have on their expectations when they originally bought their homes - their homes would maintain their resale value and they would be able to quietly enjoy their property. Many of these residents are young families with this being their first home.

With the growth of traffic on FM 2978, these residents now find the noise from this traffic has grown to an intolerable stage. The existing Open Space Forest Reserve (OSR) and wood fence adjacent to FM 2978 is insufficient to mitigate the existing roadway and truck noise being emitted from the road. The residents believe, without appropriate noise abatement measures, the current situation will only worsen with the expansion and widening of FM 2978 as it will accommodate higher traffic from the Grand Parkway and increased use by large trucks and industrial traffic.

A Preliminary Design and Environmental Assessment Project for FM 2978 has been underway since 2011 but to date we have heard no results from that work. I and several of the residents led an effort, with the help of Senator Tommy Williams, to obtain assurances from TxDOT that the concerns regarding traffic noise would be properly addressed during the construction phase of the project:

- (1) February 6, 2012, Letter from TxDOT (Mr. Phil Wilson, Exec. Director)-Attached
- (2) June 25, 2012 TxDOT email copy below

*"The environmental study is currently underway with Montgomery County as the lead. Noise measurements were made but the study is based on the computer model which uses projected traffic numbers. State and Federal policy is that if someone builds a home along an existing road, they are responsible for their own noise mitigation. If the State builds or widens a roadway near existing homes then the State is obligated to provide noise mitigation. The future project will provide noise mitigation but since the study is not completed and approved, I cannot say where noise walls will be built. The requirements can be found in 23 CFR 772.*

*Request - Since the current Preliminary Design and Environmental Assessment Project has not yet been completed and we have received no further communications from TxDOT in regard to the above assurances, we are requesting that the TPC assure us that the project will only be approved and funded based on a commitment that the scope of the project will include:*

- 1) An actual noise measurement study, in addition to performing the typical noise modeling analysis, to measure the existing traffic noise coming from FM 2978. Attached

is a Resolution #11282011A, dated November 28, 2011, approved by the Board of Directors of the Village of Sterling Ridge and a letter to TxDOT from The Woodlands Township in support of such a sound study and consideration of the impact of the FM2978 Widening Project on their residents.

- 2) An erection of an acoustical sound wall, in accordance with Federal National Highway Administration specifications, within the existing OSR, to reduce the existing traffic noise to meet the following standard:
  - 65 dBA during the day (generally considered to be 7:00AM to 10PM)
  - 58 dBA during the night (generally considered to be 10PM to 7 AM the next day)
- 3) The use of Permeable Friction Course Asphalt as the surfacing media at least along the portion of the road fronting any single or multifamily residences located adjacent to FM2978.

I fully endorse the views of the affected residents. In approving this project, I request that you seriously consider their concerns and potential impact of the project on the quality of their home life.

*Mike Bass, Director, The Woodland's Township Board of Directors*

## **Letters & Other Correspondence**



January 27, 2012

Mr. Pat Henry, P.E.  
Director of Project Development  
Texas Department of Transportation  
Houston District  
Texas Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 1386  
Houston, Texas 77251

RE: Texas Department of Transportation, Houston District, Project ID 305002024,  
Widen FM 2978, S of Dry Creek to FM 1488, Montgomery County

Dear Mr. Henry:

The Woodlands Township Board of Directors has received two resolutions from concerned residents that live adjacent to FM 2978 in the Villages of Alden Bridge and Sterling Ridge in the Township. The resolutions regard the proposed widening of the FM 2978 roadway and ask that the Township act in support of the requests. The resolutions are attached for your information.

In support of the residents and in accord with the attached resolutions, The Woodlands Township requests that the Texas Department of Transportation conduct actual sound measurements in the Sterling Ridge and Alden Bridge neighborhoods adjacent to FM 2978 as part of the environmental assessment that is being conducted for the project. In addition, the Township asks that TxDOT evaluate and implement practical sound mitigation measures as a part of the actual widening construction project to minimize traffic noise levels experienced by residents adjacent to FM 2978.

Sincerely,

Don Norrell  
President/General Manager  
The Woodlands Township

cc: Texas State Senator Tommy Williams  
Texas State Representative Rob Eissler  
Montgomery County Commissioner Ed Chance, Precinct 3  
Montgomery County Commissioner Craig Doyal, Precinct 4  
Michael W. Alford, P.E., District Engineer, Houston District, TxDOT



# Texas Department of Transportation

DEWITT C. GREER STATE HIGHWAY BLDG. • 125 E. 11TH STREET • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 • (512) 463-8585

February 6, 2012

The Honorable Tommy Williams  
Texas Senate  
P.O. Box 12068  
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Senator Williams:

Thank you for your letter to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) regarding the widening project on FM 2978 from Spring Creek to FM 1488 in the Woodlands. We appreciate hearing from you.

We understand residents' concerns about noise pollution in the area. Per your request, TxDOT will conduct a physical onsite noise analysis as part of the environmental study on this project. Please be assured that we intend to hold public involvement meetings about this project and we are committed to developing a design with the public's comments in mind.

Thank you again for your letter. I appreciate your dedication to the improvement of the State's transportation infrastructure. If you have additional questions on this or any other matter, please contact me at [REDACTED]. Staff inquiries may be directed to Sarah Matz, Legislative Liaison, Government and Public Affairs Division at [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

Phil Wilson  
Executive Director

cc: Texas Transportation Commission  
Michael W. Alford, P.E., Houston District, TxDOT  
Sarah Matz, Government and Public Affairs Division, TxDOT

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