

Proposed Roadway Improvements Project Number GATE-132(1) Gateway National Recreation Area

Miller Field Area
Staten Island Unit, New York

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

March 10, 2004

6:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.

Fort Wadsworth Visitor Center, Building 120
Gateway National Recreation Area, Staten Island Unit



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division
Sterling, Virginia

In cooperation with:



National Park Service
Gateway National Recreation Area



Office of the Borough President
Staten Island, New York

BACKGROUND

Welcome to the public meeting for the proposed Miller Field Area roadway improvements at Gateway National Recreation Area (NRA). The Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division (EFLHD) of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the National Park Service (NPS), and the Office of the Borough President for Staten Island, New York, is developing alternatives for proposed improvements within the Miller Field Area of the Staten Island Unit of the NRA. A northern access road is being proposed as well as improvements to the parking areas. Repairs are needed to improve access to the park and increase the parking capacity.

The principle proposals of the project are:

- a) Construct a new entrance and parking lot at Father Capodanno Boulevard.
- b) Reconstruct Parking Lot E.
- c) Reconstruct and re-stripe Parking Lot F.
- d) Construct a new pedestrian trail of approximately 225 feet in length.
- e) Expand Parking Lot B to add a third row of parking.
- f) Redesign the traffic circle to improve traffic flow.

As part of the planning and analysis, the FHWA and the NPS are preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the build and no-build alternatives for this proposal. The goal is to select the alternative that meets the project purpose and need with minimal impacts to the social, natural, and cultural environment.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this project is to improve access to the NRA and increase parking within the Miller Field Area. Currently, park users coming from the north must drive several miles out of the way and enter the park from the south.



Staten Island Unit of the NRA

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement is a critical part of the project planning and development process. The FHWA and the NPS consider public involvement essential to ensure that the action taken by the agencies provides the greatest benefit to the region by improving access, safety, increased mobility and preservation of the natural and cultural landscape of the area. It also offers an opportunity for individuals, representatives of civic groups, public agencies, and governing bodies to offer comments, submit written material, and ask questions regarding the proposed project, as well as to become informed of the schedule for future events in the process. Maps and other pertinent information are provided as displays at the meeting. Public information meetings permit an exchange of ideas and information for the development and selection of alternatives, identification of

potential impacts and selection of preferred courses of action. Comments will assist the planners in addressing the community's concerns. The intent of this process is to develop a design, which meets the project needs, yet minimizes adverse environmental and community impacts.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

1. No Action Alternative: The no-action alternative would result in the roadway and parking improvements not being performed. No northern access route would be available to access the park.

2. Build Alternative:

a) Construct a new entrance and parking lot at Father Capodanno Boulevard.

A new access road from the north would be constructed at Father Capodanno Boulevard. The proposed two-lane entrance road would be approximately 250 feet in length and terminate in the new parking area.

b) Reconstruct Parking Lot E.

Parking Lot E would be relocated in order to improve the configuration. A portion of the existing footprint would be utilized for the new parking. The remnants of the existing gravel parking area outside the footprint of the proposed parking area would be converted into green-space. The new parking area would be paved.

c) Reconstruct and re-stripe Parking Lot F.

The parking lot would be reconfigured to expedite traffic flow in and out of the parking area, and to maximize the number of parking spaces. Currently upon the end of games and/or special events, there is a bottleneck problem at the parking area exit.

The Park also proposes to install lights at the comfort station in order to aid patrons when returning to their vehicles. The lights would be minimal in nature and not intended to light the fields. A "vandal resistant" light bollard configuration is being explored.

d) Construct a new pedestrian trail of approximately 225 feet in length.

A tree lined trail is proposed. The trail would provide green space mitigation as well as a safe passage for elderly patrons who may want to park at the proposed northern access parking area and walk to the proposed pavilion. The proposed path may include several sharp turns to discourage use by cyclists and skaters who may endanger pedestrians. The path would be bordered by oak trees of larger caliper and flowering shrubs. Park benches would be installed at various locations to provide a shaded respite area.

e) Expand Parking Lot B to add a third row of parking.

Parking Lot B would be expanded to three rows. This expansion is proposed to occur on the north side and would require the relocation of several smaller caliper (6") trees. Moving the Park traffic and associated noise may directly impact the neighborhood on the northern boundary of the park.

f) Redesign the traffic circle to improve traffic flow.

The Park proposes to redesign the traffic circle to improve traffic flow. The circle would be controlled in such a way as to eliminate users bypassing traffic restrictions (i.e. driving on grass to bypass the bollards). Access would be maintained for emergency vehicles

to pass through this circle unimpeded in either direction. The roadway in this area would also need to be reconstructed in order to provide an adequate pavement structure.



Aerial photograph of Miller Field

TENTATIVE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

Public Information Meeting	March 10, 2004
End Public Comment Period	April 10, 2004
Environmental Assessment (EA) Available for Public Review	Summer 2004
Compile comments on EA	Summer 2004
Issue Decision Document	Fall 2004
Begin Construction	2005

PUBLIC COMMENT FORM

The improvements to the Gateway National Recreation Area are being coordinated between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the National Park Service. Final decision regarding the proposed action has yet to be accomplished before construction can begin on this project. The needs and comments of the local residents, neighboring communities, and interest groups are important considerations for this project. Please feel free to submit any concern or comment utilizing this form. We ask that you please submit your comments to the address provided below by April 10, 2004.

Name: _____

Address _____

Do you have any concerns regarding the proposed Preferred Alternative?

Do you have any Additional Suggestions or Comments:

For further information, please contact:

Mr. Dennis Durbin
Environmental Compliance Specialist
Phone: 1-800-892-8776 x1541
(571) 434-1541

Ms. Brigitte A. Azran
Environmental Compliance Engineer
Phone: 1-800-892-8776 x6283
(703) 404-6283

Or Write to:

Federal Highway Administration
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166
Fax: (703) 404-6217