

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking member Antonio and members of the Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of House Bill 155.

My name is Cindy Meadows. I'm married with 2 children and reside on Boston Rd in Brunswick Hills Twp.

My home sits back from the road and there are many mature trees between the two that provide the feel of being in the country. The trees and frequenting wildlife are grounding and peaceful. Which is one of the reasons we chose this particular property. If this interchange is forced on us, that sense of peace and beauty will be forever changed.

If Boston Rd should need widened to accommodate the extra traffic, and be viable for trucks, many of the trees, including Christmas trees we planted with our children after the holiday, will be taken. The wildlife that lives and passes through on a daily basis will be affected as well.

Those particular thoughts and repercussions are important to me and my family. We moved here from the West side of Cleveland to give our children a better experience of a calmer and greener environment.

I don't think my home will be taken by eminent domain but a good portion of my front property will. And I question if I will be compensated.

I'd also like to mention the jet fuel line that runs through my property. It will need moved for the expansion of the road. It runs through Brunswick Hills Twp, Brunswick and Hinckley on the south side of Boston rd.

East Palistine is in the forefront of my thoughts with the thought of this project. I understand Engineers are knowledgeable in the process, but it doesn't ease my mind because accidents happen and this could prove dangerous as no one seems to know the exact age of this pipeline.

Then there is the matter of money. We could try to sell...but this is our forever home. And at this point we will not gain back the equity we have worked so hard to build in the last 10 years. Besides, who would want to purchase a home on a busy, truck traveling highway, putting their family and children close to the dangers the interchange would bring? It's common knowledge that human and sex trafficking is higher near interchanges.

As I understand it, Brunswick will be forced to absorb the cost for the Brunswick side of Boston Rd, as well as the natural gas and jet fuel lines to be moved. Then add in the long-term maintenance cost and any future improvements. How is it okay for one city to force it onto another, who doesn't want it in the first place?

I've learned that Strongsville has pushed for this interchange for many years. I have heard the mayor repeat "it is a matter of safety not convenience." However, on their city website there is a map of Foltz Industrial parkway, of which I have provided you a copy, with a hand drawn blue line from their Industrial Park to Boston Rd, and that line is labeled "Industrial Park Extension".

This is not about safety as our Governor was lead to believe.

The ultimate goal is to connect the two for financial gain. This interchange would redirect truck traffic from Strongsville's Rt 82/I-71's congested area to Boston Rd, then continue a few miles through a rural residential area and on to Foltz Parkway. Boston Rd is not capable of the weight limits that trucks would bring regularly.

In the summer of last year, I read an article in the Strongsville Post dated April 20th 2013. In that article, titled "Councilman raises possibility for an I-71 Boston Road interchange", former Strongsville councilman, who is their present State representative's son-in-law, was quoted as saying "we have a huge stake because the whole point of the Boston Rd Interchange is to connect it to the Industrial Park".

In addition, the mayor of Strongsville stated at a council meeting over the summer that they have been waiting 18 months to hear back from the Army Corps of Engineers about the wetlands that lie between Foltz Parkway and Boston. These remarks show me it's about financial gain, not safety.

If it was, why bring even more complex dangers to his residents in the south end of his city, and other residents in communities across the street?

The problem lies in Strongsville, and they keep building in and around the congested area in question for economic gain, with what seems like no consideration for anything else.

For example, I just recently I learned that a developer plans to construct more businesses and restaurants exactly where the traffic congestion already exists on Rt 82/Royalton Rd across from Howe Rd, which is the precise area of congestion IN THEIR CITY lies.

Boston Rd stretches several miles. There are 2 intersections that have some businesses, and literally the rest are homes and rural property.

I would like to extend an invitation to my home, to our community, to see the environment that would be so negatively impacted by an interchange.

A mistake has been made in House Bill 23 and I humbly ask you to support House Bill 155.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify here today, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Meadows

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Brunswick Hills Township, Ohio.

https://www.thepostnewspapers.com/brunswick/local_news/councilman-raises-possibility-for-i-71-boston-road-interchange/article_f322d4f4-353a-52ff-b97b-1d80d1932e22.html

Councilman raises possibility for I-71 Boston Road interchange

Duke Southworth said connecting to industrial parkway key

By TERRY BRLAS Strongsville Post editor

Apr 20, 2013



Duke Southworth



The Boston Road widening project, which has been in discussion since the early 1990s, has been cancelled by the Ohio Department of Transportation.

Photo by TERRY BRLAS

STRONGSVILLE – Strongsville Councilman-at-Large Duke Southworth was speaking to the media following the regular City Council meeting on April 15. A resolution was passed a matter of minutes earlier urging the Ohio Legislature to devote resources to build sound barrier walls along the Ohio Turnpike. Then he said something about a topic that was seemingly declared dead in the water a number of weeks ago.

The councilman stated sound barrier walls should only be one piece of a program to limit noise and move traffic through Strongsville.

“Traffic is a definite concern around town. One of the things is the Boston Road interchange. We should look at alleviating that traffic along (state Route) 82,” Southworth said. “I think a lot of towns are going to be lined up with their hands out. Let’s be the first one.”

Southworth admits that the city of Brunswick could be the lynch pin to getting an I-71 interchange at Boston Road accomplished. He is open to talking with city of Brunswick officials to draft a joint resolution between the two municipalities.

"We might be in a better financial position than they are," he said. "I think it's something worth pursuing and I think it's something we need to talk to Brunswick about and see what the barometer is reading down there."

Strongsville would benefit more from a Boston Road interchange than Brunswick would due to better access to the Strongsville Business & Technology Park, according to Southworth.

"We have a huge stake because the whole point of the Boston Road interchange is to connect it to the industrial parkway," the councilman said. "Our stake in the industrial parkway is a lot bigger than Brunswick's stake."

Southworth was not ready to say that the city of Strongsville should foot the lion's share of any associated costs of a Boston Road interchange. He did say the potential economic payoff has to be weighed versus money spent on a project such as this.

"If we're going to spend money as a city are we going to reap multiples of that down the road? Last February Joe (DeMio, councilman-at-large) brought up the discussion regarding traffic concerns. Besides Costco that was the most feedback that I received," Southworth said. "It should be on the table. We need to figure out a way to alleviate traffic one way or another. Maybe it's the Boston Road interchange. Maybe it's something else."

Striking while the iron is somewhat hot seemed to be Southworth's attitude toward the Boston Road interchange.

The councilman pointed the bond revenue funds from the Turnpike and strong representation at the state level. In addition to State Sen. Thomas Patton (R-Strongsville) and State Rep. Mike Dovilla (R-Berea), Speaker of the House William Batchelder (R-Medina) represents Medina County and the residents of Brunswick.

During testimony before the House Committee on Finance and Appropriations on the transportation portion of the executive budget, Dovilla asked ODOT Director Jerry Wray and Ohio Turnpike Commission (OTC) Executive Director Rick Hodges about the use of funds resulting from the

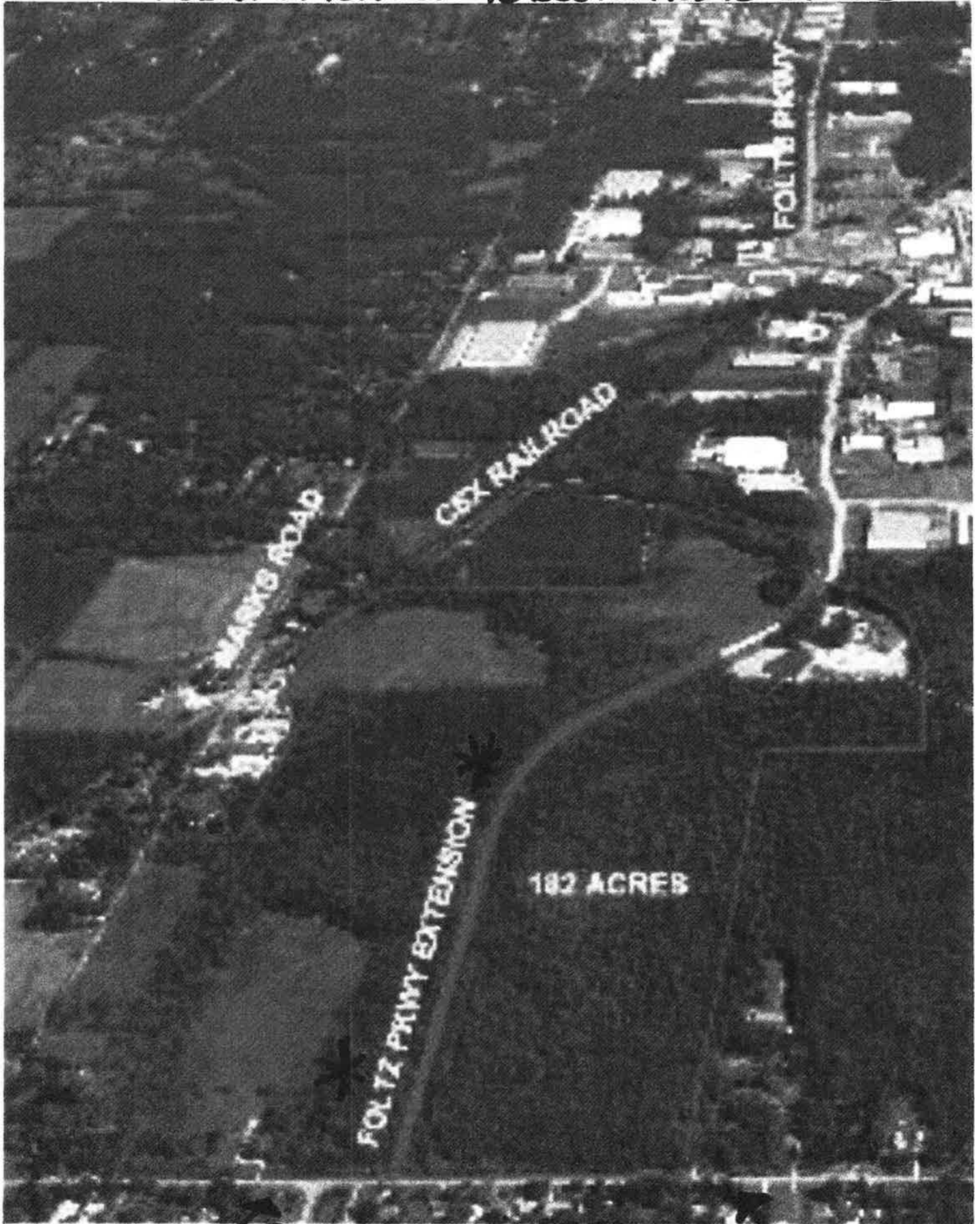
potential issuance of new Turnpike bonds for noise mitigation devices at appropriate locations along the toll road.

"I was pleased that Director Wray, in response to my questions on noise mitigation, stated he envisions, 'one of the first things that we will do, right across the Turnpike, is we will have a program to address those issues,'" Dovilla said. "For nearly two decades, constituents in the communities I now represent have been subjected to persistent noise resulting from the Turnpike's third lane project. With or without the issuance of new bonds, a matter on which I have not yet made a final decision due to concerns with the proposal's potential for diverting Turnpike dollars from northern Ohio, I remain committed to addressing this quality of life issue for my constituents."

As far as Southworth is concerned, it's a matter of developing a laundry list of accomplishable items. Some are seemingly more achievable than others.

"Let's come up with a wish list. One of the easy items on the wish list would be the sound barrier walls. The more complicated one would be the Boston Road interchange," Southworth said. "One of the complaints that I've gotten has been about noise coming from the highways. I see this as a golden opportunity with the Turnpike bond funds to be vocal. Sound barrier walls would be great. Traffic congestion relief would be even better. Let's see how far we can go with it."

FOLTZ EXTENSION TO BOSTON RD IS BLUE



/ BOSTON RD IS RED LINE ^

