

Steven W. Becken
Public Works Manager

Malcolm Bowie, P.E.
County Engineer

Area Code 509
Prosser 786-5611
Tri-Cities 736-3084
Ext. 5664
Fax 786-5627

Benton County

Department of Public Works

Post Office Box 1001 - Courthouse
Prosser, Washington 99350-0954

October 23, 2009

Kathy Hunter, Deputy Assistant Director, Transportation Safety
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. SW
PO Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

RE: Wisner Parkway at BNSF RR Crossing
CE 1918 CRP
Docket No. TR-042083

Dear Ms. Hunter:

On October 16, 2009 we submitted plans for the Wisner Road BNSF RR crossing project to Todd M. Kuhn, PE, BNSF Railway Company, Manager Public Projects for his review. This project was established August 4th, 2005, under Docket No. TR-042083.

Mr. Kuhn brought to our attention inconsistency of our plans in regards to the Establishment design submittals.

Those design submittals were as follows:

1. Two lane road access roadway
2. Approximately 3% ascending grades on both sides
3. Speed limit is 35mph
4. Approximately 50' of level grade on each side of the tracks
5. ADT was not determined yet

Item #1: After the Establishment of the crossing was received, this alignment was then submitted to the FHWA. Their approval was needed as the horizontal alignment tied into the FHWA access controlled portion of Badger Road opposite the eastbound on/off ramps at Exit 109 on I-82. . FHWA denied our request for a break on November 28, 2007.

Because the crossing is needed, Benton County moved the crossing 150' southwesterly so that the alignment fell outside the FHWA jurisdiction. We contacted the UTC and it was determined that the existing established corridor would cover the new horizontal alignment. Our survey crew was then sent out to re-stake the new alignment and collect the associated topographic data.

During this time the Kennewick School District purchased property to build a new elementary school. Several other major businesses and public agencies have also either purchased property, or submitted proposals to the landowner to purchase the property upon completion of the railroad crossing.

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The road was initially designed as an access road mainly for trucks serving the industrial area as it developed. The increased school bus traffic was not initially considered in the proposed design. With the addition of school buses and to reduce stacking at the intersection, we determined that adding a left turn lane would be appropriate.

In determining the cost of the crossing and road, we initially prepared an estimate of cost for the project utilizing the old equipment removed from the Piert/Riek Road at grade railroad crossing. Mr. Kuhn has informed us in writing that the equipment is too old and will not be allowed to be used. Because we did not anticipate needing new railroad crossing equipment, we are now facing the potential of having inadequate funding to do the project. One budget cut would be to remove the center turn lane and go back to a two-lane road as originally proposed. If we revert back to a two-lane road, we would be back to the original cross section that was approved in the Establishment. We would like to obtain approval to increase the paved width to three lanes if the funding is available.

Item #2: Badger Road runs downhill from the originally proposed intersection to the new location 150 feet southwesterly. This resulted in a drop in elevation on Badger Road of 1.35 feet. The elevation of the tracks remained essentially the same. The distance between the tracks and the road remained the same, which results in a steeper road grade. Without doing extensive work on reconstructing Badger Road, we are unable to meet the 3.00% grade on the Badger Road side of the crossing. Because of the required minimum level area of 30 feet at the tracks and the short distance between the tracks and Badger Road, the grade between the tracks and Badger Road will be approximately 5.00%.

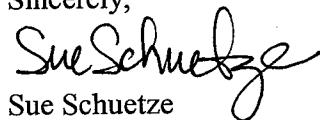
Item #3: The speed limit would be posted at 25 MPH instead of 35 MPH as originally anticipated due to the increased slope of the grade.

Item #4: We will increase the level grade from the tracks westerly for 50 feet, but because the distance between the tracks and Badger Road is so short we will only be able to have a 30 level grade easterly from the tracks, which is the minimum required by BNSF.

Item #5: ADT on the Cottonwood Drive BNSF RR Crossing is currently 1,500. That road is four years old and residential build out is approximately 40% complete. Wisner Parkway will be transportation for a commercial area, elementary school, and more residential homes. Proposed ADT within 1 year is estimated at 2,000 ADT. A forecasted ADT will then double within two years, with an estimated 3% increase per year after that.

We would like to proceed with the project under the existing Establishment. Please let us know if you agree with our findings.

Sincerely,



Sue Schuetze
Engineer II

C: Steven W. Becken, Public Works Manager
Malcolm Bowie, County Engineer
Norm Childress, Engineering Services Manager
Marty Groom, Chief Inspector
Larry Moser, Financial Administrator
Bryan Thorp, Project Engineer