

THE STATE OF TEXAS

JUNE 14, 1971

COUNTY OF JOHNSON

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS' COURT in and for Johnson County, Texas, on the above mentioned date at the Courthouse at Cleburne, Texas, with the following members present: Thomas E. Ball, County Judge, C. W. Atwood, Commissioner Precinct No. 1, O. B. Hadley, Commissioner Precinct No. 2, W. I. Boteler, Commissioner of Precinct No. 3, B. B. Aldridge, Commissioner Precinct No. 4, and Joe L. Townes, County Clerk.

Meeting was opened with a prayer by the Reverend Joe Knowles.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hadley and seconded by Commissioner Atwood that all bills against Johnson County be allowed and ordered paid, as submitted, examined in open court, and properly endorsed.

All voted aye.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hadley and seconded by Commissioner Aldridge to pay Texas Power & Light Company \$2,960.00 and private contractor \$1,000.00 to install underground electrical service to the courthouse - enter contract not to exceed \$3,960.00.

All voted aye.

A motion was made by Commissioner Atwood and seconded by Commissioner Hadley to approve the Deputation of Richard F. Pearson as a Deputy Sheriff.

All voted aye.

A motion was made by Commissioner Aldridge and seconded by Commissioner Hadley to approve placing of marker on courthouse lawn by United Daughters of the Confederacy.

All voted aye.

The following Texas Highway Department letter was read and approved:

TEXAS HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
P. O. Box 6868
Fort Worth, Texas 76115
June 4, 1971

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
Negative Environmental Declaration

Control 259-5 & 260-1
Johnson County Clerk
U. S. Highway 67: From Cleburne to Ellis County Line

Honorable Thomas E. Ball
County Judge, Johnson County
County Courthouse
Cleburne, Texas 76031

Dear Judge Ball:

In compliance with paragraph 5 (b), Draft Instructional Memorandum, dated November 24, 1970, "Interim Guidelines for Implementation of Section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969," attached is a copy of the negative environmental declaration covering the proposed improvements on the above described section of U. S. 67.

This is for your information and file.

Yours very truly,

R. W. Crook
District Engineer

LGL:bc Attachment

TEXAS HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL DECLARATION
FOR
U. S. HIGHWAY 67
FROM CLEBURNE
TO ELLIS COUNTY LINE
IN JOHNSON

1. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING FACILITY: This project is located in Johnson County. The existing roadway consists of a two-lane 26' asphalt surface with surfaced shoulders in fair condition. At the City of Alvarado there are two short segments of divided roadway.
2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT: During the presentation of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce Highway Committee before the Texas Highway Commission on August 1, 1969, a request was made for the Highway Department to investigate the possibility of providing a four lane highway from Cleburne east to the Ellis County Line along U. S. Highway 67. On September 30, 1969, the Texas Highway Commission issued Minute Order No. 62781, which directed the State Highway Engineer to enter into Contractual Agreements with the appropriate local officials for the purchase of required right of way in Johnson County on U. S. Highway 67 from Cleburne to the Ellis County Line, a distance of approximately 16.7 miles.

The proposed expansion to a four-lane facility consists of using the existing two-lane highway and developing it into a section generally to be four 12-foot lanes with a 16-foot paved left turn mediana, all of which is to be constructed within the existing right of way. Construction easements for back slopes will be required at 15 locations with the width varying from 2 to 20 feet. The area of the easements will be approximately 3.5 acres. Existing R. O. W. width varies, with a minimum of 120 ft. within the Cities of Cleburne and Keene, a curb and gutter

municipal section of 86 feet of roadway will be constructed. The approximate 2.25 miles of existing 220 foot usual right of way along the existing Alvarado bypass will be used to develop a four-lane divided section with a normative 60 foot median.

3. PURPOSE OF PROPOSED PROJECT: A multi-lane facility is needed because of the increase in traffic volume along U. S. Highway 67. The increase in traffic volume from 4,600 ADT 1970 to estimated 15,000 ADT 1990 requires this highway to be upgraded to safely handle the traffic.

4. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS: No controversial issues have developed because of the proposed project along the existing route. Significant alteration of the existing character of the area will be very minor due to the proposed project. The land use between Cleburne and Alvarado has been as small farms on relatively poor, brown clayey soil, with increasing conversion to residential use. The land between Alvarado and the Ellis County line is generally black, sandy loam, and the land has remained in agricultural use. Future land use along this project is anticipated to be by way of small acreage, residential developments. No people or businesses will be displaced due to the proposed project being constructed along and within the existing right of way.

Impact on recreation lands will not be of any consequence due to this project.

There is the usual limited extent of bird and small animal wildlife found in the general vicinity of existing roadways passing through rural lands, and it is assumed that this project will not have any detrimental effect on the pattern or behavior of these wildlife species. A careful survey of all the trees alongside this highway for the 16.7 miles in question, made easy by usual winter denudation of deciduous trees, disclosed only a single bird nest above the right of way, and that was on a very high branch of a tree actually rooted in contiguous private property. There is no reason to expect this single nest to be disturbed by this proposed project.

The conversion of the present grass slopes of the existing highway right of way to pavement will involve destruction of the relatively few large trees presently extant, which are in the immediate construction area or appear to be a definite safety hazard to the traveling public. This unavoidable circumstance is mitigated by the fact that smaller trees will be salvaged by

removal to some other right of way site in District 2 for replanting for shade of for culvert demarcation. The engineer and landscape architect shall work jointly toward the objective of preserving trees for their scenic, historic and acsthetic value.

In summation, inasmuch, as there is little or no wildlife domiciled on the right of way of this proposed project, no adverse impacts upon animals and birds are to be expected.

Air or water pollution problems do not appear to exist because this widening project will result in the replacement of slope and ditch portions of existing right of way with conduit and pavement.

No effect on the water table of the area can be foreseen due to the small amount of excavation required on this type project.

Benefits to local and long distance travel will be increased by this more useful facility which has become necessary due to the growing traffic volume along this route. The increased conversion of land use to small residential acreage already has placed a substantial need for left-turn or cross-over protection for local traffic. The only other alternative is to abandon all highway construction along this route and permit impossible traffic conditions to develop.

Transportation quality of the general area will be upgraded by the additional lanes being used for passing and safety.

Social and economic opportunities for area residents would appear to be in the fact that people can live out of the city but have more convenient, better, and safer access to the metropolitan areas for work and recreation as they my desire, because of these proposed improvements.

Employment opportunities will increase during the short term period of road construction, and the travel time for local residents to their jobs will be shortened after completion of the project.

No schools will be affected directly, however, the bus routes of some of the local school systems use this highway. The widening of the existing two-lane roadway will make it safer for the school children.

No religious organizations or places of worship will be affected by this proposed project.

5. BASIS FOR NEGATIVE DECLARATION: There is no action, as defined by Department of Transportation Order DOT 5610.1, October 7, 1970, that will have

