

MEMORANDUM

February 6, 2006

MEMO TO: Mayor and Board of Trustees

FROM: Philip J. Modaff, Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: I355 Extension Soundwall - I55 between Woodward Avenue and Lemont Road

When the Toll Authority introduced their intentions in Fall 2004 to construct the I355 Southern Extension, the Village offered its support for the project. The Toll Authority's project plans call for construction of a soundwall on the south side of I55 (between Lemont and Woodward) in unincorporated DuPage County and also on the north side of I55 west of I355 in Bolingbrook.

As project plans began to be disseminated to affected municipalities for review and comment, Woodridge immediately began insisting that a noise barrier should be constructed on the north side of I55 between Woodward Avenue and Lemont Road. Through a series of phone calls, letters and meetings, staff from Public Works, Administration, and Planning and Development attempted to convince Toll Authority staff to support funding for construction of a sound wall. Mayor Murphy, Administrator Perry and several staff members met with the Tollway's Chief of Planning with no success.

The Toll Authority has adopted the position that developments platted following the publication of the updated Environmental Impact Study (EIS - April 1999) would not be considered for noise abatement efforts at the expense of the Toll Authority. As a result, homes in Vicente (which was platted prior to 1999) would be considered while none of the subsequent Gallagher & Henry homes near the interstate would.

The EIS indicated that some factors do exist which would support construction of a soundwall in the area along the north side of I55 between Woodward and Lemont. While the south side of I55 met all the factors necessary to support construction of the barrier, the north side reportedly failed to meet two key factors:

- Only a small number of existing homes in Vicente would actually benefit from the construction of a noise barrier (see the attached aerial photograph) . All of the data we have read and all of the experts we have consulted concur that homes must fall within 500 feet of the roadway in order to experience qualifying reduction in noise.
- The cost of a noise wall on the north side of I55 is estimated at around \$1.7 million (15-foot high wall x 4,500 lineal feet x \$25/sq.ft.). According to adopted policy, the cost of noise barrier must not exceed \$24,000 per benefited residence. Assuming we accept that none of the G&H units can be considered in the analysis (because of their platting after 1999), the cost per residence for the benefited homes in Vicente would be over \$240,000, far exceeding reasonable standards for construction of a barrier. Even if G&H units (including Smoter) along Heritage Parkway are considered in the formula, the cost per benefited residence will exceed \$42,000 per home.

We have shared results of the most recent noise study with several engineering consultants who specialize in this work. Our meetings with those engineering experts were informal, but each of them advised that the Toll Authority had employed generally accepted standards and that the data supported the Toll Authority's conclusions. Each further advised it would be extremely difficult to make an argument supporting Woodridge's demand that the Toll Authority be responsible for construction of a noise wall on I55.

Interstate 355 Southern Extension
Soundwall Issue
Key Points

- Toll Authority policy states that developments platted after April 1999 will not be considered for noise abatement efforts at the expense of the Toll Authority.
- Experts agree that homes located beyond five-hundred feet (500') of a soundwall experience little, if any, noise abatement benefit.
- Toll Authority policy states that the cost of noise barrier must not exceed \$24,000 per benefited residence.
- Based upon the Toll Authority's April 1999 cut-off date, seven homes (located in Vicente) would benefit from the installation of soundwall (see attached aerial photo).
- Based upon an analysis of the planned build-out of homes to the north of Interstate 55 between Woodward Avenue and Lemont Road, 33 additional homes in G&H unit 25 and Smoter would benefit from the installation of soundwall (see attached aerial photo).
- The estimated cost of soundwall installation on Interstate 55 from Woodward Avenue to Lemont Road is in excess of \$1.7 million.
 - To build this wall for the benefit of the seven qualifying homes (under Toll Authority policy) would result in a cost of over \$240,000 per home.
 - To build this wall for the benefit the seven Vicente homes and the additional thirty-three homes that fall within five-hundred feet would result in a cost of over \$42,000 per home, still far exceeding the Toll Authority policy.