



SKIPPACK TOWNSHIP

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**RE: SCI Phoenix
DGS Project 577-36 3rd Revised Rebid
Status Update**

As discussed at the Township meeting in July, the Department of General Services (DGS) promised updates on a variety of issues. I apologize for the delay in providing specific responses, but DGS' homepage (www.dgs.state.pa.us on the lower left-hand side) has been and will continue to provide a direct link to SCI Phoenix information to make access as simple as possible. This link will continue to be updated throughout the course of the project. In the near future, the page will be updated to reflect the identity of the successful proposers. The following topics represent DGS' responses as to areas of particular concern to the residents.

Roadway/Traffic

- 1) Will DGS/Department of Corrections (DOC) consider abandoning the Rte. 73 entrance for the Cressman Road entrance?

DGS and DOC have reviewed this option. Putting more traffic onto local neighborhood roads is more problematic than maintaining the Route 73 entrance. We can continue to evaluate the traffic, but this request is unlikely to occur.

- 2) Can DGS/DOC open/repair the Route 29 entrance in addition to or in replacement of the Route 73 entrance?

Discussions are underway dealing with the following:

A) Can minor repairs be affected to keep standard vehicular traffic on the bridge as it is now?

B) Can weight restriction be modified to allow DOC busses to cross?

C) Can full replacement of the bridge be effected by PADOT?

DGS will continue to pursue these issues and provide answers in a timely fashion. Since some of these might depend upon budget availability, answers may have to wait until bids are reviewed and we know the cost of the contract.

- 3) Will DGS' Design/Build Contractor for the Prison be required to build highway noise barriers to screen the east side of permanent Route 73 entrance?

In evaluating this option, we have identified two problems. First, the new road serves as a drainage point to pull water flow away from the property edge and secondly, there is not enough space to safely taper a berm or add barriers. The best approach at this point in time will be to monitor the design process and ensure that the final design encompasses mature screening trees and/or bushes on the east side. DGS will discuss the residents' concerns about this issue and encourage the Design/Build Contractor to suggest ideas based upon their experience.

- 4) Will the existing Cressman Road be gated at conclusion of construction?

Yes. This is the current plan according to DOC.

- 5) Will DGS and DOC try to coordinate Route 73 improvements with other local road improvement projects?

Yes. This is the plan. DGS will continue to discuss with PENNDOT.

- 6) Are there requirements for dust control during construction?

Yes. The Contract documents contain dust control measures.

Noise

- 7) Has DGS done a noise impact study? If so, what does it indicate?

DOC continues to evaluate several operational adjustments. Once that assessment is complete, DGS will complete an estimate of the noise impacts. The Utility Plant documents do set forth noise limits (65db) at the fence surrounding the plant. The 65 db is defined as able to have normal conversation without background interruption. Based upon the proposed location of the plant, there should be little noise impact on the adjacent property.

- 8) Can DOC make operational adjustments to reduce noise?

DOC is evaluating options for adjusting exercise periods and other noise activities. To the extent it is feasible to adjust these activities, DOC will consider it, so long as doing so does not jeopardize the safe operation of the facility.

- 9) Will delivery truck noise be a problem at the new sallyport area?

Truck traffic over local roads and through the sallyport will be greatly reduced since the new utility plant will eliminate the need for coal deliveries. The DOC Correctional Industry deliveries are not traffic or noise intensive. The food delivery trucks schedule will probably remain the same, but might actually be slightly less frequent since the new facility will have slightly larger cold and dry storage areas.

- 10) Can the DGS contractor be required to plant berms early in the construction sequence?

This has been addressed. The contract documents require berms and plantings to be done as early as possible in the construction schedule.

- 11) Can DGS move the football/exercise fields inside or to the North side?

This design idea was not accepted by DOC since this would require moving the housing units too far from support and response facilities.

Visual

- 12) Can DGS move the prison to the west side of property?

No. DGS carefully assessed the entire Graterford property in deciding where to place the new facility. Constructing the new prison on the west side of the property is not feasible due to a multitude of issues, including, but not limited to, setback issues, security sight line requirements, drainage issues, backfill issues and stream/wetland issues.

- 13) Can DGS move the prison slightly to the west and/or south of planned location?

Slight alterations in the final location of the facility are allowed as part of the contract documents. Movement or shifting the facility to the south will be limited by wetlands in that vicinity. There is also minimal room to the west due to the road and a need to place the female transitional unit in that location. The successful contractor will be asked to prioritize the final placement of the facility as one of the first issues during the design submittals.

- 14) Can DGS increase the height of the berms between the prison and adjacent properties?

Yes. DGS has re-designed the berms and included this new information as a requirement of the contract.

Communications

- 15) Does DGS have a website link that can be placed on Township Webpage?

DGS has provided the website. The Township can consider placing the link on their page.

- 16) Does DGS agree to return for formal meetings to appraise of how requests have/have not been addressed.

Yes. DGS and DOC continue to stand by our commitment to make periodic presentations as coordinated with the Township.

Future prison development

- 17) Does DOC have plans for future housing units other than "inside the fence"?

Neither DOC nor DGS can commit that there will never be future expansion beyond the current facility. There is space within the fence of the new facility to handle some future expansion.

18) Can DGS guarantee that contractor will employ only Pa. workers?

No. The construction documents comply with existing Pa. law on this subject.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth O'Reilly
Deputy Secretary for Public Works

Attachments: Pre-Proposal attendees

cc: The Honorable John C. Rafferty
The Honorable Marcy Toepel
The Honorable Sheri Phillips, DGS
Holly Lubart, Legislative Liaison, DGS