I-16/I-75 Interchange Project: Recurring Impacts on the Pleasant Hill Community

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I-75/I-16 interchange in Macon

- I-75 is a major north-south interstate
- I-16 begins its route to Savannah
- Project proposed to address safety & congestion concerns
Pleasant Hill neighborhood

• Low income, historically black neighborhood
• Listed in the National Register
• First Macon neighborhood planned, constructed & inhabited by rising black middle-class
• Divided by I-75 construction in the 1960s
“Half-house”

- Remaining half of 1950s duplex – emblematic of toll I-75 had
- Original ROW negotiations with highway department – owner opted to purchase property back & retain half as rental unit
Pleasant Hill

- Developed between the 1870s and 1950s
- Modest homes
- Minimal setbacks
- Mature trees to rear of lots
Pleasant Hill

- Churches
- Schools
- Corner stores
Pleasant Hill

Community remains invested in their neighborhood
Pleasant Hill - current

I-75 looking north through the neighborhood
Pleasant Hill - after

Rendering looking north along I-75 following proposed improvements
Neighborhood input – comprehensive mitigation strategy

- Environmental justice concerns
- Community impacts
- Impacts to historic neighborhood
Mitigation

- Updated National Register nomination
- Recorded oral and video history of the neighborhood
- Created mobile panels on history of neighborhood
- Catalogued holdings of community center
- Documented photographically
- Developed design guidelines for new housing
- Created “virtual walking tour”
Mitigation – physical amenities

• Improved pedestrian overpass
• Covering open concrete channel
• Linear park
• Penniman Resource Center
• Housing
Improved pedestrian overpass

Current

Proposed
Cover open concrete channel

- Stream runs for several blocks in an open concrete lined channel
- Will be covered to reclaim area
- Reconnect areas on each side
Linear park

• Area adjacent to interstate “blighted & crime ridden”
• Project displaces houses near the interstate
• At urging of community, additional houses taken for park – increasing impact to historic district
Linear park

- Linear park will be built on remaining land on east side of I-75
- Future park – passive recreation amenities (e.g., walking paths, kiosks on neighborhood history, thematic panels on noise walls)
Little Richard’s home

- Move Little Richard’s boyhood home to Jefferson Long Park
- Park improvements – terrace rolling terrain
[Little Richard]
Penniman Resource Center

Renovate for use as a neighborhood resource center
INITIAL PROPOSAL
relocate homes to vacant lots

- Vacant lots in Pleasant Hill neighborhood
- Opportunity to purchase lots & provide infill housing

- Owners offered opportunity to relocate to rehabilitated home
- Owners opted to sell
Challenges

• 2010 estimate
  ➢ Prepared by a house mover
  ➢ Average cost to move and rehabilitate each house - $70,000
  ➢ 2010 average home value – approximately $41,000

• 2015 – accepted bids to move four houses
  ➢ One bid received
  ➢ Average cost to move and rehabilitate each house - $600,000
  ➢ Architect’s review revised estimate to approximately $400,000 per house
  ➢ 2015 average sale price - $50,000

• Increase in estimate per house between 2010 & 2015
  - $330,000 to $530,000

• Increase in estimate for all 24 houses between 2010 & 2015
  - $7.9 million to $12.7 million
Current status

• Entered into an agreement with Macon-Bibb County Community Enhancement Authority
  ➢ Authority created by Georgia General Assembly in 2012 to target specific causes of intractable poverty
  ➢ Provide 24 houses for sale or rent
    ✓ Relocate & rehabilitate 7 homes
    ✓ Construct 17 new homes
  ➢ Jobs training for workers assisting in tear downs and new construction
Contact information

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