CHAPTER 22: RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ON THE DEIS

Introduction

This chapter summarizes and responds to all comments on the DEIS issued in April 2012 for the Stony Brook University Medical Center Medical Facilities and Parking Project. Public review for the DEIS began on April 20, 2012 with publication and distribution of the document.

On April 20, 2012, DASNY issued a Combined Notice of Completion of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of Public Hearing. These notices were published in the April 20, 2012 edition of Newsday and the April 25, 2012 edition of the NYSDEC Environmental Notice Bulletin. The combined notices and copies of the DEIS were sent to the involved agencies and interested parties on DASNY's mailing list for the Proposed Project.

DASNY held a public hearing on Friday, May 4, 2012, in Lecture Hall 5 of the SBUMC Health Sciences Center located at 100 Nicolls Road in Stony Brook, New York. The purpose of the hearing was to receive comments on the DEIS. There were no attendees and no comments were received at the public hearing. The public comment period remained open until May 21, 2012.

This chapter presents written comments received during the public comment period, identifies the organizations and individuals who commented on the DEIS, and summarizes and responds to those comments. The public hearing transcript and written comments (one comment letter) are included as Appendix C.

DEIS Comments and Responses

This section lists all individuals and organizations that commented on the DEIS, along with their comments and a response to each comment. The comment summaries convey the spirit of the comments made, but do not in all cases quote the comments verbatim.

There were no speakers at the May 4, 2012 public hearing and only one comment letter was received from the NYSDOT. Thus all of the DEIS comments discussed below were submitted by NYSDOT.

Noise

Comment 1: The proposed traffic mitigation measures identified for the Nicolls Road and NY25A and Nicolls Road and NY347 intersections, as discussed in the DEIS, should be
evaluated for potential noise impacts based on the NYSDOT Noise Analysis Policy and Procedures specifically as they may relate to the Type I project description and auxiliary lanes.

Response: New noise analyses have been prepared to evaluate the potential noise impacts associated with the proposed traffic mitigation measures identified for the Nicolls Road at NYS Route 25A and Nicolls Road at NY Route 347 intersections. RDEIS Chapter 15, “Noise,” has been revised to include the new analyses.

The new noise analyses prepared are consistent with the screening-level noise assessments for the three traffic intersections that were originally included in the DEIS Chapter 15, “Noise” (i.e., Nicolls Road at Entrance Drive, Nicolls Road at South Drive/Health Sciences Drive, and Health Sciences Drive at Edmund D. Pellegrino), and generally comply with methodology presented in NYSDOT Noise Analysis Policy and Procedures.

The noise screening analysis involved tabulating Noise Passenger Car Equivalent (“PCE”) values for each traffic intersection, based on vehicle type, and vehicle volumes approaching each intersection. This was done for the Existing, Future Build, and Future Build with Mitigation Conditions. If existing Noise PCE values at an intersection are increased by 100 percent or more due to the Proposed Project, which is equivalent to a noise level increase of 3.0 dBA or more, a more-detailed analysis would be performed to determine the potential for significant adverse mobile source noise impacts. The noise screening analysis results for the two additional intersections indicate that existing noise PCE values are projected to increase by amounts that are much less than 100 percent (i.e., the greatest increase projected is a 24 percent increase over existing PCE value for the NYS Route 25A and Nicolls Road intersection during the p.m. peak hour). Thus it was determined that the Proposed Project would not cause a significant adverse vehicular noise impact at these locations and further vehicular noise analysis is not warranted.

It is important to note that the Proposed Project includes restriping to change the reconfiguration of an existing lane from a left-turn-only lane to a shared through/left-turn lane, which does not meet the criteria of a Type I project per section 772.5 of the Code of Federal Regulation (“CFR”) (i.e., lanes would be the same width and in the same location; no new auxiliary lanes would be added).

Air Quality and Energy

Comment 2: NYSDOT requests that DASNY contact the Nassau/Suffolk Transportation Coordinating Committee to determine if the Proposed Project qualifies as regionally significant under the Transportation Conformity Regulation 40 CFR Part 93 and should be included in regional emissions analysis.

Response: DASNY has reached out the Nassau/Suffolk Transportation Coordinating Committee (“N/STCC”) and has received confirmation that the Proposed Project does not qualify as regionally significant (see Appendix A, Agency Correspondence). Accordingly, the
Proposed Project does not require inclusion in the New York Metropolitan Transportation Commission (“NYMTC”) conformity regional emissions analyses.

**Planning**

Comment 3: Cross access between developed properties should be strongly encouraged. Local access to developed property for pedestrians and bicyclists should also be considered.

Response: As noted on page 13-20 of the RDEIS, cross access between properties under the control of the project sponsor is currently available, utilized and encouraged. Pedestrians and bicyclists can travel between SBU’s West and East Campuses via a walkway provided in the tunnel underneath Nicolls Road. On the East Campus, the tunnel entrance is situated northwest of the Hospital complex, adjacent to the northern end of the HSC complex.

Informal local access to SBU’s West, East and South Campuses currently exists for pedestrians and bicyclists. The campus is not gated or otherwise closed to the public. For example, as noted on page 5-4 of the RDEIS, the 26-acre Ashley Schiff Preserve located at the northern end of the SBU South Campus is open to the public.

Additionally, with respect to local access to developed property for pedestrians and cyclists, at least one well-travelled path has been created over time that provides an informal “short cut” to the East Campus from the surrounding residential area to the northeast of the SBUMC campus (i.e., residences east of the Long Island High Technology Incubator facility, along University and Jackson Drives). The path connects the northeast corner of Health Sciences Drive with University Drive and allows pedestrians or cyclists to avoid a lengthy, circuitous trip that would otherwise be necessary to access the SBU Campuses (e.g., University Drive to Pond Path to Sheep Pasture Road to Nicolls Road). It is possible that other similar paths exist in other peripheral locations controlled by SBU. SBU cannot improve access or property off of the campus.

Comment 4: NYSDOT is supportive of the Travel Demand Management (“TDM”) concepts being proposed within the DEIS.

Response: Comment noted.

Comment 5: NYSDOT no longer employs the services of Long Island Transportation Management. 511NY Rideshare, which is sponsored by New York State Department of Transportation, provides an enhanced level of services, tools, and information on cost-effective and reliable alternatives to driving alone. These alternatives which may be available to employers, commuters and the general public include carpools, vanpools, public transit, bicycling, walking and teleworking. 511NY Rideshare’s goal is to provide commuters with a mobility plan that is flexible enough to adjust to the changing conditions on our roadways. To enhance this goal, planning is in place for a launch of www.511nyrideshare.org at a later point in 2012. This new website will provide a suite of programs and services including the above mentioned ridematching for carpools and vanpools, employer commuter benefits services, and
resources and information for transit, bicycling, walking, telework and other options.

Response: RDEIS Chapter 13, “Traffic and Transportation,” has been updated to reflect NYSDOT’s new sponsorship of the 511NY Rideshare program.