

September 22, 2002

Mr. Carl Goode, P.E.
Manager of the Office of Human Environment
1583 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1583

RECEIVED
SEP 26 2002

Dear Sirs:

Anyone who has visited Blowing Rock would tell you that it is truly "a slice of Heaven on Earth." Those of you who have not experienced Blowing Rock need to do so before plowing a highway corridor through what is one of North Carolina's most unique treasures.

Blowing Rock is not just another small town trying to cling to it's past and fight progress. It is a living, functioning time capsule of a town that has transcended time... and prospered in the process. It offers a unique blend of upscale shops, quaint lodgings and fine dining, situated in a genuinely enchanted Rockwellian village. All this, with the cool, beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains as a background.

Blowing Rock is a place where the quality of a small town life known to past generations has been embraced, nourished and preserved. A place who's idyllic lifestyle has been immortalized by best selling author Jan Karon in her popular Mitford series of novels.

Blowing Rock draws a wide range of people from near and far who come to experience the safety and serenity of what small town life used to be... before the world changed... before "progress."

Blowing Rock draws youngsters and elders, sweethearts and families, many of whom come simply to stroll our safe streets, or sit in our park eating ice cream, as the gleeful sounds of children playing nearby wash their cares away.

Blowing Rock is truly a magical place... a slice of Heaven on Earth.

Now, you wouldn't plow a four lane highway through Heaven... or would you?? Of course you wouldn't. You'd go around, or tip toe through respectfully and leave it undisturbed. Think of Blowing Rock in this regard.

Build your super highway to our doorstep. Once there, respect what we have created, and why it is people come to this special place. Go around. Or, if you must, tip toe through. Build a center turning lane on our present bypass. Add no more stoplights and maintain the current 35mph speed limit. Through traffic will flow more easily. The road will continue as a relatively safe corridor, with only minor mishaps, instead of a four lane raceway, with serious accidents, major tie-ups and intrusive noise. Our village will continue to prosper, yet maintain it's serenity

and charm. Use the money you will save on a REAL bypass. And this wonderful place will continue to be... The Crown Jewel of The Blue Ridge.

Preserve... Respect... and Protect.. It's one of North Carolina's most unique Treasures. Save it now, before it is consumed by "progress"... and lost forever.

Respectfully,



Ed and Ruby Sleeper
359 Westview Drive
Blowing Rock, NC 28605

B-221

Subject: Project number 6.739001T

Date: Tue, 27 Aug 2002 14:54:53 -0400

From: "Patricia Smith" <patricia.smith@broughtonhospital.org>

To: <cgoode@dot.state.nc.us>

I am now living in Morganton, North Carolina but was born and raised in Boone, North Carolina. I am NOT in favor of taking property to make a new 321 highway.

I vote to widen the existing Hwy. 321 using both sides of the highway.

I will be glad to discuss this in further detail if you need additional information. I can be reached by email at patricia.smith@broughtonhospital.org

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT SHEET

RECEIVED
AUG 27 2002

US 321 Improvements

Corridor Public Hearing

R-2237C

Project 6.739001T

Caldwell and Watauga Counties

August 26, 2002

NAME: Luci Smoak
ADDRESS: 333 Sunset Dr. Wilkesboro NC 28697

COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

Blowing Rock is a destination type of town. When traffic is heavy and backed-up, it is usually traffic destined for Blowing Rock. Even if the traffic is guided over, under and through the mountains, it is still going to end up in congested Blowing Rock. The alternate suggestions for the Hwy 321 bypass around Blowing Rock are illogical to me, as well as extreme and expensive. I hope those plans are not employed. I express my concern as a taxpayer, a Blowing Rock homeowner and a citizen who loves the beauty & serenity of the area described in the alternate plans.

Comments may be mailed to:

C. B. Goode, Jr., P. E.

Manager of the Office of Human Environment

1583 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-1599 Phone: (919) 250-4092 Fax: (919) 250-4208

E-mail: cgoode@dot.state.nc.us

B-222

COMMENT SHEET

US 321 Improvements

Corridor Public Hearing

R-2237C Project 6.739001T Caldwell and Watauga Counties

August 26, 2002

NAME: Dallas Snyder

ADDRESS: 3969 Blackberry Road

COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS: *The right thing, an the smat:*

thing is the cheapest, widen existing road,

B-223

Comments may be mailed to:
C. B. Goode, Jr., P. E.
Manager of the Office of Human Environment
1583 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1599 Phone: (919) 250-4092 Fax: (919) 250-4208
E-mail: cgoode@dot.state.nc.us

Subject: us 321 corridor public hearing
Date: Mon, 16 Sep 2002 21:57:34 EDT
From: GEOSNYJR@aol.com
To: cgoode@dot.state.nc.us

dear mr. goode,
my husband and i attended the hearing and i thought that many voices of the blowing rock community were heard. thank you so very much for extending the time that our citizens could speak as there were many opinions to be expressed. it greatly concerns us that so many people we have spoken with have felt that dot's objective for so long was to divide the community over the various options. i truly hope this was never the case. our greatest concern is to protect the beauty of this area of the north carolina mountains and also blowing rock. one of the reasons people drive to the mountains is to enjoy the anticipation of the curves and the beauty that follows once you are on the mountain....it is all part of the adventure.
my husband's grandfather, j. luther snyder began coming to blowing rock in the early 1920's when he purchased chetola. it is now 2002 and my husband (his grandson) and i have a permanent home in blowing rock. we have a deep rooted feeling for this region and the protection of it.
we oppose the options that dot has presented including the widening of hwy 321.
it is our opinion that all of these proposals divide the town of blowing rock not only physically but the road would divide it as a community.
we propose that a true bypass of continuous traffic should be constructed away from the town of blowing rock. none of your proposals are acceptable and we implore you to continue the search for a more viable option that would protect the scenic beauty and quaintness of the town.
we are in favor of a study being made to construct the bypass from lenoir to hwy 421 at north wilkesboro. why has dot not done a thorough investigation of this option as an alternative.
please give us a voice and continue to search for another option that would protect our precious mountain environment for future generations.
we have had our first two grandchildren. they are now the 5th generation of snyder's to visit blowing rock. please think of these precious children and protect the beauty that has brought early generations to this special area.
thanks for giving our thoughts your highest level attention.
laura and george c. snyder jr.
376 pinnacle drive
blowing rock nc 28605

August 19, 2002

Governor Michael F. Easley
Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-0301



Dear Governor Easley,

You have the ability to influence the decision regarding the widening of Route 321 through my town of Blowing Rock, N.C. I am requesting that you oppose such action as well as any additional road through the town. As you know our main industry is tourism and widening 321 would destroy the ambiance of Blowing Rock. Most, if not all, similar projects within our state have had by-passes if the local voters objected. You will find that a majority of our citizens do not want a widening of 321 in our township.

B-224

Please contact anyone you can think of to get NCDOT to find another solution for traffic from Boone to Lenoir. Money should not be the overriding issue on the long term impact for this area.

Thank you for handling this issue for me and I look forward to hearing from you regarding your actions.

Very truly yours,

Jim Steele
P.O.Box 1235
Blowing Rock, N.C. 28605

cc. attachment

RECEIVED
AUG 27 2002

Blowing Rock, North Carolina

SEP 05 2002

After listening to the entire hearing, it is my belief that the citizens of Blowing Rock, Caldwell County and Watauga County, are adamantly opposed to either 1) widening Highway 321 to four (4) lanes through Blowing Rock or 2) cutting through the Green Hill or Blackberry area for a bypass alternative. The people on both sides of these issues demonstrated a resolve to spend the time, effort, and resources to battle the NC Department of Transportation or any other agency or group as long as necessary to preserve their respective national treasures.

It is understood by all parties that the NCDOT has the legislative directive to build certain type roads in particular areas of the state. But that directive implies a moral obligation to the citizenry of the state: to protect natural, historical, cultural, economic, etc. resources. It also implies that the highway department use good judgment and common sense in planning routes.

Please evaluate the possibility and feasibility of constructing your four-lane road from the Lenoir area in a northeast direction to connect with US 421, which already has a four-lane road up the mountains through Deep Gap and beyond. The added distance from the Lenoir area to the Boone area would be only a few miles and almost no travel time differential. A cost evaluation would surely be advantageous in most scenarios.

Through creativity and imagination, NCDOT could be revered as a true leader in developmental progress as well as a sincere protector of its citizens and other valuable resources.

David H. Stevens
852 Dogwood Lane
P. O. Box 1776
Blowing Rock, NC 28605
828-295-3021

Sept. 1, 2002

CITIZENS RECEIVED
SEP 11 2002

COMMENT SHEET

US 321 Improvements

Corridor Public Hearing

R-2237C

Project 6.739001T

Caldwell and Watauga Counties

August 26, 2002

NAME: Pamela Svedelius

ADDRESS: 3203-L Allerton Circle, Greensboro, NC 2740

COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

Economically, widening the existing 321 is most appropriate. As a tax payer of North Carolina, I prefer to save money! As a resident of North Carolina, it makes perfect sense to widen the existing road, rather than plowing through the beautiful forests, existing homes, Ruining the mountains, etc. Considering the economic State of North Carolina, it only makes sense to save money by widening the existing highway. Thank you for your consideration.

Pamela Svedelius

Comments may be mailed to:
C. B. Goode, Jr., P. E.
Manager of the Office of Human Environment
1583 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1599 Phone: (919) 250-4092 Fax: (919) 250-4208
E-mail: cgoode@dot.state.nc.us

-1-

Dawning Rock, NC,
if hope you will

consider had a private the
oss it could be to our
state to destroy the
private "village" of

Young Rock consider
in alternate plan for
the improvement of us,
Highway 321.

Thank you very much,
Sincerely,

Josephine L. Suttline

Dear Mr. Gilmore,

August 2002

As a summer visitor
to the town of Dawning
Rock, NC since 1968, I was
outraged to read of the
proposed use of the town
of Dawning Rock for the
improvement of U.S. Highway
321. I will certainly write
& express my objection to
this proposal to those in
NC Public Office - especially
those that have homes

B-225



**Caldwell Community College
and Technical Institute**
Office of the President

September 20, 2002

Mr. Samuel L. Erby, Jr.
Board Member
North Carolina Department of Transportation
Post Office Drawer 230
Granite Falls, NC 28630-0230

Dear Sam:

The Board of Trustees, at it's regularly scheduled meeting on September 19, 2002, instructed me to convey on their behalf a recommendation with regard to the safe travel of faculty, staff and students between the campus in Caldwell County and Watauga County. The Highway 321 project will have an impact on the aforementioned groups of individuals. As such, it is our recommendation that the North Carolina Department of Transportation consider for the project the safest, most cost-efficient route that would be the least disruptive to the environment. We endorse the widening of Highway 321 in place.

If I may be of further service, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Larry W. Taylor, Chair
Board of Trustees

bmg

US 321 Project at Blowing Rock

Subject: FW: US 321 Project at Blowing Rock
Date: Wed, 4 Sep 2002 08:40:37 -0400
From: 'Scales, Reggie' <ScalesR@pbworld.com>
To: 'Carl Goode' <cgoode@dot.state.nc.us>

-----Original Message-----

From: BTh1930@cs.com [mailto:BTh1930@cs.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 03, 2002 3:53 AM
To: ScalesR@pbworld.com
Subject: US 321 Project at Blowing Rock

We own property on Blackberry Road and spend about 2 months each year in the area.

We strongly recommend widening the current 321 route around Blowing Rock because of cost and impact on the area.

Bobby E. Thomas
Lena H. Thomas
4916 Vernon Road
Tallahassee, FL 32317

B-226

improvements

Subject: FW: 321 Improvements

Date: Wed, 4 Sep 2002 08:40:08 -0400

From: "Scales, Reggie" <ScalesR@pbworld.com>

To: "Carl Goode (cgoode@dot.state.nc.us)" <cgoode@dot.state.nc.us>

CC: "Missy Dickens (mdickens@dot.state.nc.us)" <mdickens@dot.state.nc.us>, "Page, John" <PageJ@pbworld.com>

DOCUMENT SHEET

US 321 Improvements

Corridor Public Hearing

R-2237C

Project 6.739001T

Caldwell and Watauga Counties

August 26, 2002

-----Original Message-----

From: Lenaht@cs.com [mailto:Lenaht@cs.com]

Sent: Monday, September 02, 2002 10:19 PM

To: Scales, Reggie

Subject: 321 Improvements

NAME:

Mr. & Mrs. Gerry Thompson

ADDRESS:

113 Laurel Grove Lane (P.O. Box 2586) - Blowing Rock, NC 286

COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

We think that none of the alternatives for U.S. 321 as proposed is the answer. The current 321 By-Pass could have a turn lane put in to permit turning off of 321 at intersections or into businesses along the way, but other than that, the road should be left as is. Why not widen Hwy. 18 which goes through rural land & intersects with 421 and completely bypasses Blowing Rock? If another bypass is going to be necessary within 10 yrs. of the completion of this current "improvement", why not build the other bypass now? Blowing Rock will lose its small town charm and appeal if this major 4 lane highway is routed through it.

Comments may be mailed to:

C. B. Goode, Jr., P. E.

Manager of the Office of Human Environment

1583 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-1599 Phone: (919) 250-4092 Fax: (919) 250-4208

E-mail: cgoode@dot.state.nc.us

As an owner of property in the area, I am quite concerned about some of the routes being discussed. After examining the map of suggested routes, I feel very strongly that the BEST and MOST ECONOMICAL is to follow the existing road with the needed improvements.

Thanks for your consideration.

Lena Thomas

B-227

COMMENT SHEET

US 321 Improvements

Corridor Public Hearing

R-2237C Project 6.739001T Caldwell and Watauga Counties

August 26, 2002

NAME: Ava E. Lipton
ADDRESS: 223 Lipton Lane Blowing Rock, N.C. 28605
COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:
Wider present route only!

B-228

Comments may be mailed to:
C. B. Goode, Jr., P. E.
Manager of the Office of Human Environment
1583 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1599 Phone: (919) 250-4092 Fax: (919) 250-4208
E-mail: cgoode@dot.state.nc.us

COMMENT SHEET

US 321 Improvements

Corridor Public Hearing

R-2237C Project 6.739001T Caldwell and Watauga Counties

August 26, 2002

NAME:

Ruby Craig Diston

ADDRESS:

223 Diston Lane

COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

Blowing Rock, NC 28602

Widen the present road only

B-229

Comments may be mailed to:
C. B. Goode, Jr., P. E.
Manager of the Office of Human Environment
1583 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1599 Phone: (919) 250-4092 Fax: (919) 250-4208
E-mail: cgoode@dot.state.nc.us

Winston-Salem Journal, August 29, 2002 an article on Ashe County quoted Dale Baldwin, the mayor as saying :

" Although there's plenty of money flowing through Blowing Rock, we don't want to be another Blowing Rock. We want to be a place that everybody around here feels comfortable in, not just the visitors and the newcomers."

Maybe the following statements will justify that quote:

On Tuesday night, August 12, The Blowing Rock Town Council supported the plea from the Concerned Citizens of Blowing Rock by a vote of 4-1 against the DOT's plan for the four lane. (This is the road that those of us who have lived here will remember being built as the bypass, now being passed off as Valley Blvd.) Each commissioner is welcome to his or her opinion, but to arbitrarily decide for the town?

On Monday, August 19, a flyer arrived in our mail with a Mooresville, NC postmark, a Cornelius return address and signed by a woman who neither lives or owns property in Blowing Rock. The Steering Committee is made up with people who now live in Blowing Rock or are old Blowing Rock families and have summered here for years. Why are there no native families included in the mix?

The Country Club just this year took the golfing privileges away from Green Park Hotel. This will no doubt do more to hurt their clientele than a four lane road and changes an agreement that has existed forever. A decision that certainly was not in the best interest of our village. We talk about saving our historical treasures and Green Park is on that list. Where was the outcry then?

We know these people, go to church with them, shop with them, plant flowers with them. Make them feel welcome and hopefully made friends. There are many people who are not against the bypass being four-laned, we have waited for years. Do we want our Town Fathers siding with one group or the possibility of using our tax base to litigate our state DOT. How sad to see the possibility of hundreds of thousands of dollars being wasted to retain attorneys to "FIGHT DOT".

The flyer states that: YOUR TOWN IS GOING TO BE IRREVOCABLY CHANGED IF THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PUTS A FOUR OR FIVE LANE HIGHWAY THROUGH BLOWING ROCK.

Everyone loves Blowing Rock, but Blowing Rock was irrevocably changed years ago - - that is why we need a four lane road and following the existing bypass only makes sense unless you opt to desecrate more mountain property.

The us against them theme is not a credit to the residents or to our town and certainly not when it comes from someone who does not contribute to our town in any other way.



B-230

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
RECEIVED
SEP 12 2002

September 17, 2002

Ms. Missy Dickens, PE
Project Development and
Environment Analysis Branch
NC DOT
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 286799-1548

Dear Ms. Dickens:

We would like to express to you our feelings concerning the widening of Highway 321 Bypass in Blowing Rock, NC.

For some time now we have been hearing a lot about this project, but some of the things we hear from the "concerned citizens" just does not make a lot of sense. The misleading statement that the road will go thru the middle of downtown Blowing Rock is not true. We that have lived here for many years know the present 321 Bypass is just that—a highway that bypasses the Town of Blowing Rock.

We wonder if those opposing the widening of the bypass have ever considered the fact that if it does take an alternate route, some of their businesses may suffer because some of the travelers (tourists) will in fact completely bypass Blowing Rock.

The only logical route for the road is in its PRESENT location. The alternate routes will cost so much more with all the tunnels and bridges that will be required, that it will add a great financial burden to the state of North Carolina. This we do not need.

We hope you will consider the desires of the people who want the present bypass widened instead of completely building a new highway.

Sincerely,



Don and Janice Tolbert
134 Hodges Miller Road
Blowing Rock, NC 28607