

**Route 41 (Gap Newport Pike) and Route 841 (London Grove Road), Chester County, PA
PennDOT Engineering District 6-0**

June 11, 2019 Open House Comment Response Document

Prepared October 18, 2019

This Comment Response Document was prepared to respond to comments received during the public open house on June 11, 2019 and those comments received by July 2, 2019. Below provides a response to the common comments received. Since the June 2019 public meeting, PennDOT has dismissed Alternatives 9 and 10. Alternatives 5a, 5b, and 6 will be carried forward.

Comment #1: Most of this could be dealt with by law enforcement occasionally enforcing the right-of-way rules at the existing intersection.

PennDOT Response #1: A traffic study published in 2014 and available for download at www.pa41.com concluded that the existing intersection had multiple safety concerns (limited sight distance, confusing set-up, little to no pedestrian accommodations, vehicles traveling too quickly, etc.). In addition, a survey found that 61% of respondents found it difficult to cross PA 41 from PA 841, and 39% said they avoid turning or crossing at the intersection altogether. PennDOT concluded that an intersection improvement project was needed.

Comment #2: West Grove Fire Company responds to assist on emergency calls in London Grove Twp. Worst case scenario for a responding vehicle is a 43' overall length with a 228.5" wheelbase/Roundabouts must be big enough to handle multiple trucks.

PennDOT Response #2: Proposed roundabouts include a truck apron in the center to allow space for trucks to make the turns. They are designed with the expectations of trucks driving over the aprons.

Comment #3: Suggest an option for a roundabout in center of the existing intersection, on as close to center as feasible.

PennDOT Response #3: The location of a roundabout at the center of the existing intersection would cause significant impacts to the existing community. A roundabout in the vicinity of the existing intersection was studied in August 2015 (Alternative 2 and 3). These alternatives were dismissed from further study. A roundabout in this location would impact all of the commercial and residential properties at this intersection and at the approaches. The following are anticipated to be displaced with this option: Chatham Hotel; XPresss Stop Gas; Santilli Auto Works, and at least 6 residential properties. Therefore, due to these impacts, this is not an option for the project.

Comment #4: Alternative #9, the alternative with stop signs at the intersections, will not calm traffic on 41.

PennDOT Response #4: The stop signs would force vehicles to slow down as they approach the intersections. Since the public meeting, Alternative 9 has been dismissed from further study.

Comment #5: Option 9 high in/out access to East London Grove Road is too close to the current intersection, which could cause confusion for where to turn, and people could try to turn left out of access since there is no median barrier on 41/Intersection of E. London Grove Rd. Route 841 would require a slight redesign to allow for left turn onto 41. Consider turning this option into a roundabout.

PennDOT Response #5: Since the public meeting, Alternative 9 has been dismissed from further study. Also see responses to #3 and #4.

Comment #6: Option #6 would be nice if it used a roundabout. Would also like to see a roundabout incorporated into Option #10.

PennDOT Response #6: Since the public meeting, both Alternative 6 and Alternative 10 were studied as roundabouts at these locations. Alternative 6 as a roundabout satisfies all of the project needs and will be carried forward into further study. However, Alternative 10 only provides partial improvement and does not fully satisfy the project needs. Alternative 10 was dismissed from further study.

Comment #7: For Alternative 10, the information does not take into consideration the loss of the residence at 196 W. London Grove Rd and the impacts to separating the house across the street from the garage and impacts to living conditions changing the road next to the house.

PennDOT Response #7: Since the public meeting, Alternative 10 was dismissed from further study.

Comment #8: You need to be speaking with the property owners before you make a decision.

PennDOT Response #8: Community input continues to be valued and has been gathered at all stages of the traffic study and alternatives analysis. Individual property owners will be contacted as needed as the project moves forward.

Comment #9: Vehicles often turn out of order at the stop sign which is a dangerous situation. Having stop signs will not fix this problem, but a circle or traffic light at existing intersection will. I would not like to see taxpayer money wasted on 6, 9, or 10 as it does not solve the stop sign issue. Putting a traffic light (with sensors when cars arrive) seems to be the safest, least expensive option and if it was done where current blinking light is- this would affect no residents.

PennDOT Response #9: Traffic analysis has shown that traffic signals are not warranted at these locations. Since the public meeting, Alternative 6 has been modified to incorporate a roundabout and will be carried forward for further study. Alternatives 9 and 10 have been dismissed from further study.

Comment #10: Eliminate Alternative 10. This has low income housing that will be lost and cannot be replaced.

PennDOT Response #10: Since the public meeting, Alternatives 9 and 10 have been dismissed from further study.

Comment #11: Alternative 5A impacts residences and is more difficult for E. London Grove traffic wanting to travel south on Route 41. Alternatives 6 and 10 have serious impacts and require using a stop sign to cross Route 41. Alternative 9 is the worst of all with little positive to

speak of. I would like to see Chatham Hotel moved north of its current location to keep this structure as part of Chatham.

PennDOT Response #11: Since the public meeting, Alternatives 9 and 10 have been dismissed from further study. The remaining alternatives (Alternative 5a, 5b, and 6) do not impact the Chatham Hotel building.

Comment #12: In my opinion, having lived in Chatham for over 30 years, the intersection is confusing. Before spending millions on moving roads, displacing residents, consider improving directional signage. I know a major concern is for emergency vehicles to be able to turn left (south) on Rt 41 from Twin Pines. Lastly- please save the gas station and hotel.

PennDOT Response #12: Since the public meeting, Alternatives 9 and 10 have been dismissed from further study. The remaining alternatives (Alternative 5a, 5b, and 6) do not impact the Chatham Hotel building. The gas station would be a total displacement with Alternative 5b; Alternative 5a may require portions of the property; and Alternative 6 does not impact the gas station. As the project continues through design, these impacts will be further refined. Directional signage will be incorporated into the project.

Comment #13: Alternative 9 would be best if you can work out a better route to Route 41 for London Grove Road.

PennDOT Response #13: Since the public meeting, Alternative 9 has been dismissed from further study.

Comment #14: I think a traffic circle will cause more problems. It will be more dangerous for motorist. Circles are confusing to motorists. Traffic circles work in small towns and Rt 41 has too much traffic. People should not lose their properties and businesses they worked so hard to earn. This traffic circle that you are talking about is not a good idea. It will only make a larger mess and the community will suffer. Leave things as they are.

PennDOT Response #14: The 2014 traffic study cited above concluded that safety improvements are needed. Roundabouts have proven to be a safe alternative to signals, providing a 90% reduction in fatal crashes, 75% reduction in injury crashes, 30-40% reduction in pedestrian crashes and 10% reduction in bicycle crashes

(<https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/RoadDesignEnvironment/RoadDesign/Pages/Roundabouts.aspx>). PennDOT has been, and will continue to use, this video to assist in learning how to navigate a PennDOT roundabout. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNXRIWgAVOg>

Comment #15: No sidewalks please! I live there. No one is interested in walking along such a busy noisy highway. There are plenty of parks with trails for walking that are away from cars. Don't encourage people to walk along a dangerous, noisy highway. There is no point to sidewalks/There is no "Village of Chatham" so NO SIDEWALKS are necessary.

PennDOT Response #15: Sidewalks provide an important safety and community cohesion component to roadways and will continue to be considered as part of the project solution.

Comment #16: I am concerned that Alternative 5A will have the psychological effect splitting off the eastern section of Chatham from the rest of the village, a problem that 5B will minimize.

PennDOT Response #16: Community cohesion is a consideration and will be taken into account as Alternatives 5a, 5b and 6 are progressed through design.

Comment #17: All of the proposed alternatives, except 9, make it more difficult to travel between East London Grove Road and points south and west (Avondale, West Grove, and West London Grove Road). Alternative 9 should be rejected because it provides no improvements over current conditions. Of the others, 5B is the least disruptive. The importance of the East London Grove Road connection may not be fully apparent to those unfamiliar with the village. Much of the village's population, including a 26-unit residential subdivision, plus the Twin Pines Health Care Center, fronts on East London Grove Road. Frequent ambulance trips travel through Chatham to Twin Pines. East London Grove Road also provides the shortest link from the vicinity of Chatham to Route 926 at the village of London Grove and hence to West Chester and beyond. I personally pass through Chatham daily, from West London Grove Road to East London Grove Road and back. The July 2014 Traffic Report lumped traffic to and from 841 north of Chatham with that on East London Grove Road. However, the turning movement volumes show that traffic on these two roads combined was 57% higher than on PA 841 south of PA41 indicating that East London Grove Road may bear a significant portion of the lumped traffic volumes.

PennDOT Response #17: Since the public meeting, Alternatives 9 and 10 have been dismissed from further study. The safe and effective connection of East London Grove Road to Route 841 and Route 41 south will continue to be assessed as Alternatives 5A, 5B, and 6 are further refined.

Comment #18: Although 5A and 5B appear similar I believe there is a large difference in the way they will be perceived and accepted by the local community: Coming from East London Grove Road, with the roundabout near at hand (as with 5B), and going south, southwest, or west, a driver will face a minor inconvenience. But with the roundabout, an additional one hundred feet north on PA41 (as with 5A), the same maneuver will present an ongoing frustration.

PennDOT Response #18: Since the public meeting, PennDOT has dismissed Alternatives 9 and 10. Alternatives 5a, 5b, and 6 will be carried forward. The concerns you describe in your comment will be evaluated as the alternatives continue to be refined.

Comment #19: Neither Alternatives 6 or 10 will reduce speeds on PA41 and both disrupt the East London Grove Road connection (more seriously than either SA or SB). There is another problem. Left-hand turns from PA41 to PA841 could create major difficulties. Chatham currently functions through de-facto left turn lanes. Cars and trucks slip by the stopped traffic on the shoulder. Formal left turn lanes would be incompatible with traffic calming because they would encourage traffic to maintain highway speed, perhaps more so than currently because cars now tend to slow before slipping by. Also, it is difficult to see where the needed width would come from without foregoing the sidewalks or taking front yards.

PennDOT Response #19: Since the public meeting, Alternative 6 has been modified to incorporate a roundabout and will be carried forward for further study. PennDOT has dismissed Alternatives 9 and 10.