

Gary W. Moody  
299 ½ W. Madison St.  
Franklin, IN 46131

August 19, 2009

Michael W. Reed, Commissioner  
Indiana Department of Transportation  
100 N. Senate Ave., IGCN Room N755  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

RE: DES #0200757, City of Franklin Main Street Project

Commissioner Reed:

While I appreciate your notice that my previous efforts to educate INDOT and FHWA as to the facts of Franklin's drainage issues have been for nought, I must point out to you that withholding that information on the current state of affairs for about two months constitutes further WASTE and ABUSE on the part of INDOT and FHWA officials. I was in contact with Jim Stark and Max Azizi numerous times between the Seymour meeting in May and my receiving your letter on August 3... I have told both Stark and Azizi and as many officials as I have been able that I have posted an extensive study, conducted after last year's flood disaster, on the internet, since last September. In fact, I have just updated the site with a VIDEO REPORT on the storm of last August 4, and how the Roaring Run storm water pipe affected areas along most of its route. You will find a web page with all the FACTS you need at: <http://www.ccjcin.org/floodreport.htm>

...Getting back to Franklin's "big pipe" boondoggle, here we have what looks *on the surface* to be the product of engineering. Which is the ONLY basis for the OPINIONS of yourself, Stark, and Azizi. The question is, what **kind** of engineering? Because as you **should** know, there is good engineering, and there can also be BAD engineering. You've heard of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge disaster? No? Go to the Washington DOT (WSDOT) web site. Now there's a state transportation department with a sense of humility. Good for them. If only we had some of that, and less **pig-headedness**, in Indiana.

The facts about the Main Street project, the City of Franklin, and Bonar "Cash In!" Group's study are these:

1. At the start of this project circa 2004, the City of Franklin had no data on Roaring Run, or the surrounding storm water infrastructure, other than an old sewer map dated 1931.

2. Bonar's "Calculations for Storm Sewer Design" document dated July 14, 2004 states on the **first page**: "The town of Franklin **has no plans to change the current contributing storm sewers and watersheds.**"

This is key information. I haven't thought to do the research until now, but, knowing Hoosiers and Franklin city government as I do, I'll bet you that early conversations about this project at city hall, such as in the Board of Works (Dan Murray was probably there, let's ask him), included statements such as "Wal, dangit, the dang pipe needs to be bigger, that's all! Like I put in my corn field!" I'll bet that part of the thinking in the 1960's when the pipe was installed and the ditch covered was that there would be less overflow, and that they didn't realize they were just squeezing a balloon that would pop out of the storm inlets now and then. I can imagine the statements after the very first post-pipe flood event: "The dang pipe ain't big enough!" So for about FORTY YEARS various old-timers and lodge-hangers in Franklin have been dreaming of this "big pipe" scheme. (Unfortunately, even

though Roaring Run flooded our street and basement in the sixties and seventies, I was a kid and not part of that loop of local bar-fly and liars-bench lore. Then I joined the military in '75 and didn't hear the "big pipe" gossip until after my return in '05; At the public meeting on the project last August, actually.)

Bottom line, Bonar was HANDED this "conclusion" at the **start** of the process. IT'S JUST A LOCAL FABLE!

3. The next sentence in Bonar's document states "Therefore, **the watershed area used was limited to the area directly contributing to the right-of-way of North Main Street** and the surrounding areas the proposed storm sewer helps eliminate."

Inspecting the data sheets attached to Bonar's brief summary, one finds that, yes, water flows were studied... but only A BLOCK OR SO EITHER SIDE OF MAIN STREET! Including, apparently, the flow reaching Main Street from the Roaring Run pipe itself. Therefore, they were able to determine, in excruciatingly minute detail, that flood water DOES indeed reach a short stretch of Main Street, but not **WHY**. Shouldn't that be the first point of inquiry? Unless you're trying to pull a scam, of course. Could it be that Bonar just wants the money? Yes.

OK, I'm not a Professional Engineer, and I can't afford to hire one, so I'll have to try and express this in terms of common sense. Hm. OK. Suppose that your house suddenly became very cold in the winter. Very drafty. Using Franklin's and Bonar's and I suppose your own logic, you would apply for a federal grant, and have compliant engineers (who know they'll get paid either way) take extensive wind and temperature readings around your house. Then, having scientifically determined that the house is indeed cold and drafty, and exactly how cold and drafty it is, but especially upon the advice you received from a buddy you run into mornings at the local Waffle & Steak, you would then declare that the solution is to **buy a bigger furnace**. Having put out for bids, you then take the manna from Uncle Sugar and install a heater big enough for a battleship. Hang the cost! It ain't your money anyways.

Or, alternatively, you could first check and see if the back door is open. Aha! Maybe the reason it won't stay shut is that something is warped, and you need to pay a handyman to fix it. Still, even if you have to use your own money, it makes a helluva lot more sense than the battleship heater boondoggle.

Both Bonar and city officials, and Azizi even, have been very unclear and muddled in their statements about this. I've been told, on one occasion by Bonar employee Larry Lawlor, that the areas upstream along Roaring Run were studied, which is completely false. Bonar's study reached NONE of the adjacent streets parallel to Main; Water Street, for example, which is the next street upstream along Roaring Run, and which you see in my video as flooded on Aug. 4 at the point that Roaring Run goes under it (as well as areas further upstream to the northeast). Also, the latter half of Bonar's sentence above references streets and blocks to the west and southwest, **downstream**, of Main Street, which the "proposed storm sewer" would relieve from flooding. Those are about three and a half blocks, over two thousand feet, along a diagonal line where Roaring Run is currently. Which, obviously, is a separate community STORM WATER project (which should be dealt with by the appropriate funding) and not a Main Street STREET REHABILITATION project! As I've pointed out to Stark and Azizi repeatedly, besides the **fact** that the "big pipe" is not a rational solution to the flooding problems, the only way that it's been cobbled on to this transportation project (which flooding is basically incidental to in the first place), is by routing it along two blocks of Main Street, and even then the remainder of it, the longest part of the "big pipe," will lie outside of the scope of the project! Why is US Department of Transportation money being spent on an old wive's tale of a "flood control" project??

4. Based on these facts, this project DOES NOT MEET EVEN INDOT'S OWN STANDARDS! By which I mean the **INDIANA DESIGN MANUAL**, particularly Chapter 28, as based on the **AASHTO MODEL DRAINAGE MANUAL**. Standards which probably start when a guy like Larry Lawlor takes Engineering 101, where they surely teach you to be **competent** above all! Here are some excerpts:

28-4.02 General Hydraulic Design Policies  
28-4.02(01) Introduction

An adequate drainage structure is defined as one which satisfies the following:

1. the design of the structure satisfies or exceeds INDOT **standard engineering practice**; and
2. the design is consistent with what a reasonably **competent and prudent** designer will do under similar circumstances.

28-4.02(03) Hydraulic Analysis

The next step in the design process involves **preliminary selections of alternative designs** that are judged to meet the site conditions and to accommodate the flood flow selected for analysis.

And then you have

28-4.02(04) Engineering Evaluation, 28-4.02(05) General Policies, 28-5.0 DOCUMENTATION, 28-5.02(02) Practices;

Etc etc. Well jeez Mike, if they want to spend a million bucks, give a take a few hundred thou, on a massive urban drainage scheme without having looked at THE NEXT BLOCK UPSTREAM, is that "competent and prudent"? Is that how you do things at INDOT? If so, it's not by the book! Where are the alternatives? Where is the documentation? Where is the "complete drainage area map"? I don't think they even used the one from NINETEEN THIRTY ONE!

I sent the following to Jim Stark on Aug. 10:

"1. Does the project conform to the standards of the Indiana Design Manual, particularly Chapter 28, which is derived from the AASHTO Model Drainage Manual?

2. Assuming that the answer to the above can't be determined without study, would it not be prudent to refer the matter of Bonar's hydrology study to INDOT's Hydraulics Team, and/or the FHWA equivalent?"

I've had no reply so far. So I'll put those questions, as a **challenge**, to you, Mr. Reed. Or does the FHWA have a Hydraulics Team who could do the job and not be pressured by politics, as INDOT staff have been since early 2005? Would that be a better solution?

Here's another fact:

5. Apparently based on increasing scrutiny (like the meeting in May), Franklin commissioned a study of storm sewers and drainage in an area of "Old Franklin" a little over a mile square. The consultant was given sixty days to complete it. It was completed around the end of July, and is now available on the city web site. I thought it would establish the facts in this matter. However, it's deja vu all over again, because the consultant was told NOT to look at an alternative scheme (such as the one I suggested last May) for diverting Roaring Run. They were instructed that Bonar's "big pipe"

boondoggle will take place. However, they have proposals which dovetail with my suggestion, and they have all the data for modeling an alternative at their fingertips, in their computers. How do I know? I asked them. And I was told that an upstream Roaring Run flood solution along the lines of what I've proposed can be modeled in ONE DAY. Or less. In a process costing \$100 an hour. So, as I state at the end of my video: Isn't it worth a few hundred bucks to find out if we can actually SOLVE Franklin's "Roaring Run problem" and thereby save a million bucks or so of Main Street money? Which should actually go to improving Main Street?

And that should be the primary issue as far as transportation officials are concerned: Completing the Main Street project, in it's entirety. Which this drainage boondoggle is preventing, due to the drain on the allotted federal funding. Max Azizi told me that it's not FHWA's responsibility to fix Franklin's flooding problems. Well, exactly. Except that he meant that he thinks it's okay to fix the flooding problems **downstream** of Main, by way of fixing the problem at the lowest point **on** Main. That is as incorrect as would be the use of federal transportation funds to fix the flooding problems **upstream** of Main. Any hydraulic engineer should tell you that fixing the problem **upstream** will obviously fix the problem **on** Main Street, and it is also indisputable that such a project should be done with sources of funding targeted to flood control, whether local, state, or federal.

Finally, as to your last paragraph, for your information, INDOT, as the conveyor of federal transportation aid and Hoosier taxpayer dollars, IS the proper agency to ensure that the City of Franklin, and every other political subdivision in Indiana which receives funding via your agency, operates with prudence and best practices. This is obvious. I'm embarrassed to have to tell you such an elemental fact of life. If you are told by **any** citizen; rich or poor, engineer or layman; that the City of Franklin, for example, is incompetent in handling transportation improvements, and unwilling to change their practices, then it is your duty, and your obligation, to look into the matter, based upon relevance to INDOT operations and/or funding... you should realize that you have a carrot and a stick. The carrot is LPA assistance and more funding, and the stick is NO FUNDING. If you will prudently implement that approach, you will save us all a lot of time, trouble, and money. Frankly, I vehemently resent the amount I have invested in trying to get supposed public servants to do their jobs in this matter. Granted, citizens need to make these efforts, but again, any government official or employee who is unclear on the concept needs to stand down.

Looking forward to your reply,  
Gary W. Moody

cc:

Indiana Inspector General David O. Thomas  
Lori Miser, Indianapolis MPO  
Robert F. Tally, Jr, P. E., Division Administrator, FHWA Indiana Division  
Victor Mendez, Administrator, Federal Highway Administration  
Calvin Scovel, Inspector General, United States Department of Transportation  
Ray LaHood, United States Secretary of Transportation  
CCJCIN.org web site.