

Practical Reasons for Wegmans' and Its Vendors' Trucks To Not Use Atlee Station Road and Atlee Road from a Management and Driver Perspective

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Assumption: Trucks leaving Wegmans' DC may desire to use Atlee Station Road and Atlee Road to access I-295 South via Hwy 301.

The distances from the intersection of Atlee Station Road and Sliding Hill Road to the intersection of I-295 and Hwy 301 are:

- Via Sliding Hill and I-95: 5.2 Miles;
- Via Atlee Station Road, Atlee Road, and Hwy 301: 5.0 Miles.

Even though the distance is 0.2 miles shorter using the Atlee Station Road, etc. route, there are many valid reasons why trucks should use the slightly longer route via Sliding Hill and I-95 as the primary alternative. They are as follows:

- 1. Time:** Extra driving time affects schedules and costs. At tractor-trailer speeds, it takes about 5.5 minutes to reach the I-295/301 intersection using the I-95 route. Using the Atlee Station Road route, it would take a **minimum** 9.5 minutes during non-school zone hours when catching only half of the stop lights red. During school zone hours that occur twice a day, add at least 5 more minutes, and maybe up to 10 minutes if there were several tractor-trailers in line waiting to pass by the schools while traffic is being stopped to allow traffic in and out of the schools. When factoring in those possibilities, that could result in a total of almost 15 extra minutes of driving time using the Atlee Station Road route.

In the near future, at least one new traffic light will be installed at the entrance of the Giles subdivision across from Atlee High School. Since there will eventually be 442 housing units in Giles, the light will need to run at least a one-minute cycle and maybe more during non-school hours. Therefore, at least an additional minute plus vehicle acceleration time could be added to the Atlee Station Road route. Also, the Hanover Board of Supervisors has approved one additional traffic light for another Giles entrance which could possibly add over another minute to travel time. These traffic lights may be cycled for many more minutes during school opening and closing hours.

- 2. Costs:** When using Sliding Hill Road and I-95 to access I-295, the driver will go through his gears only once and get into 10th or a higher gear quickly where everyone knows that fuel mileage will be at its best. Whereas, using the Atlee Station Road route to I-295

where there are currently 6 traffic lights (more may be added as mentioned above), there is chance a driver may have to stop and go through the gears 6 times and maybe even several more times when stopping for school traffic. The additional costs for braking, fuel, and wear and tear on gears and other mechanical parts could be five-fold greater as compared to the one acceleration to full-speed option of using I-95 to access I-295.

- 3. Driver Effort and Risks:** Using the Atlee Station Road route would require much more attention and effort from a driving perspective to avoid the additional risks presented by local traffic, school traffic, and the extra right hand turns that would have to be executed. With new sub-divisions being built, such as Giles eventually being 442 housing units, the risks will continue to grow.
- 4. GPS's aren't always smarter than humans:** Since the Atlee Station Road route is shorter, some GPS's may suggest it. Once on Atlee Station Road, the GPS may also say to turn right to continue onto "old" Atlee Station Road after going over the new bridge. However, making that turn in a tractor-trailer would be difficult because of the room required, on-coming traffic waiting for the light on "old" Atlee Station Road that would be in the way, and because the camber for the road was not constructed for truck traffic since it tilts inward. No driver would want to attempt that turn.

Some truck drivers may want to use the Atlee Station Road route to be able to have a meal at Burger King, McDonald's, or the forthcoming Chick-fil-A on Hwy 301 since there is ample room for tractor trailers to park. Drivers could still access these locations by coming back a short distance from I-295 on 301.

Summary

Because of all the above reasons, it would be a win-win for Wegmans, its drivers, its vendors' drivers, and for Atlee Station Village along with other subdivisions and schools on Atlee Station Road for drivers to use I-95 to access I-295 South.

Recommendation

Wegmans uses PC*MILER for its GPS. If the roads in question have not been truck restricted by VDOT as is the current situation, the PC*MILER software will not automatically include the road restrictions. However, PC*MILER has configuration and programming options which can designate routes to be restricted. Even if Wegmans modifies PC*MILER to show restricted and preferred routes, and even if the Wegmans' Management Team kindly requires its truck drivers in written procedures to not use Atlee Station Road, the Hanover County Board of Supervisors should submit a formal request to VDOT to install "No Thru Truck" signs at the intersections of Sliding Hill Road and Atlee Station Road; Hwy 301 and Atlee Station Road; and Hwy 301 and Atlee Road. Even if the Wegmans' drivers abide by management requests and a customized

PC*Miler, vendor drivers may not be aware of the voluntary restrictions. Also, the vendor drivers' GPS systems may suggest that Atlee Station Road is the best route when it is not. This document could be used for the reasonable alternative route requirement as would be required in the VDOT request.

The VDOT link for the "Guidelines for Considering Requests to Restrict Through Trucks on Primary and Secondary Highways" is: ["Guidelines for Considering Requests to Restrict Through Trucks on Primary and Secondary Highways"](#)