

June 5, 2014

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF HIGHWAY DESIGN**

CONFERENCE REPORT

PROJECT: BEDFORD
X-A000(143)
13953
NH 101, Widening to 5 lanes from NH 114 to Wallace Road

DATE OF CONFERENCE: May 13, 2014

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: Bedford High School

ATTENDED BY: **NHDOT**
Victoria Chase Marc Laurin
John Butler Steven Babalis
Chuck Schmidt Michael Dugas

OTHERS
See attached sign-in sheet.

SUBJECT: Public Officials/Public Informational Meeting

NOTES ON CONFERENCE:

Steve Daly and Victoria Chase opened the meeting welcoming everyone and introduced the Town and NHDOT staff. Victoria explained that it had been a year since the last public informational meeting and the design has progressed.

John Butler explained the existing conditions within the two-mile segment of NH 101 from Wallace Road to NH 114. This segment of NH 101 was built in the early 1950s providing 12' lanes and 8' paved shoulders, with a 100' wide right of way. The posted speed limit is 40 mph, which reduces to 35 mph east of Old Bedford Road. Prior improvements have been made to this segment of highway including expansion of Wallace Road intersection (c. 1995), extension of the second westbound travel lane through the Old Bedford Road intersection (c. 2007), and installation of a traffic signal and turn lanes at Nashua Road for the Bedford High School (c. 2010).

Recent traffic counts show the average daily traffic volume on NH 101 near Wallace Road is 27,000 vehicles per day, while the volume near NH 114 is 34,000. Records from the Department of Safety indicate that over 300 crashes occurred within the project area from 2007 through 2011. The crash types and outcomes are indicative of congested traffic operations.

A corridor study was conducted by Southern NH Planning Commission for NH 101 in 2002. The corridor study's recommendations were used as the framework for the proposed improvements. The current design proposes adding an additional travel lane on NH 101 for both eastbound and westbound directions to reduce traffic congestion. The design includes installing a raised median with left turn pockets at median openings. The Department has coordinated with the Town with identifying locations for possible median openings. For some openings, left turn maneuvers will be prohibited from the side street. The current median opening locations and degree of access are as follows:

- Shorty's Mexican Roadhouse - full access
- Fireplace Village/Modern Bride & Formal Shop - full access
- Chestnut Drive - full access
- Village Shoppes of Bedford - full access
- Nashua Road - full access
- Pinecrest Drive (west) - no left turn out
- Meetinghouse Road - full access
- Liberty Hill Road (south leg) - no left turn out
- Colonial Drive - no left turn out

The following are side streets where all left turn movements are eliminated and median openings are not provided, and access would be limited to right turns:

- Pinecrest Drive (east)
- Shaw Drive
- Bedford Center Road (both ends)
- Olde Bedford Way
- All other private driveways not noted above
- Liberty Hill Road (north leg) will be discontinued altogether, no connection to NH 101

The purpose of limiting the access points on the highway is to improve safety and capacity by reducing and consolidating the number of potential conflict points where possible. Cars would be able to reverse direction by making U-turns at the signalized intersections. Larger vehicles that can't physically U-turn at the signalized intersections would need to alter their travel routes. The raised median would be modified where necessary to allow for direct emergency vehicle access.

A 4' paved shoulder, suitable for bicycle use, is proposed for both westbound and eastbound directions. Sidewalks are proposed on both sides of NH 101 from Wallace Road to Nashua Road, and on the westbound (north) side only from Nashua Road to Old Bedford Road. Crosswalks across NH 101 are proposed at Nashua Road and Constitution Drive. The existing crosswalk at Wallace Road will be retained. For the majority of the project, a 10' wide grassed swale will separate the newly constructed sidewalk from the roadway shoulder.

Generally the roadway will be widened evenly on both sides of NH 101, except from Liberty Hill Road through Constitution Drive. In order to minimize impacts to potentially historic properties and avoid the large oak tree by Bedford Village Inn, the roadway is proposed to be shifted to the south. The shift would be approximately 15' at it farthest. In addition to shifting southward, the roadway grade is proposed to be raised by up to 5' in the area of a ledge cut to further reduce impacts to private property.

Some minor work is proposed at the intersection of NH 101 and NH 114. Currently eastbound traffic along NH 101 wanting to stay on NH 101 towards Manchester must turn right at the intersection. The majority of eastbound vehicles turn right at the intersection and it is especially heavy during the AM peak hour. A single right turn slip ramp is provided for this maneuver. This causes vehicles to stack up in the right lane at Constitution Drive intersection anticipating that they need to maneuver into the slip ramp. This behavior generates extra delay since the second through lane on that approach is underutilized. The Department proposes changing the right turn slip ramp at the NH 114 intersection into a dual right turn lane under signal control. This would increase the right turn capacity at the NH 101/NH 114 intersection and encourage drivers to use the second eastbound through lane at Constitution Drive.

John reported that treating stormwater will be a difficult challenge with this project. The proposed improvements require a fair amount of roadway widening which will result in impacting approximately four acres of wetlands. Due to the size of this impact, the Department will be held to a high standard by Department of Environmental Services for stormwater treatment. Along this stretch of NH 101, there are not many locations where typical treatment measures could be installed, which will require the Department to utilize innovative techniques. Some treatment can be achieved within the grass swales between the edge of the road and the sidewalks, but additional areas will also be required. Conceptual locations for these other potential treatment areas are shown on the plans.

Landscaping may be provided where appropriate in both the median and roadside to calm traffic and improve aesthetics. An agreement would need to be made with the Town in regards to the long term maintenance of the landscaping, as well as the sidewalks.

Other environmental issues include the project's effects on conservation properties and historic properties. There are two impacted properties that have conservation easements held by the Bedford Land Trust. Determination of which properties are historic is currently ongoing, but preliminary indications are that there is a historic district along the north side of NH 101 from Bell Hill Road to Old Bedford Way, as well as one individual property on the south side of NH 101 just east of Liberty Hill Road. Impacts to all of these resources will be minimized to the extent possible, and mitigation for the unavoidable impacts will be developed through coordination with the appropriate agencies. The procedure for becoming a Consulting Party to the historic review process was briefly explained.

Utility impacts include many utility poles and an area of underground telephone lines. There are a limited amount of existing Town water and sewer lines within the project area, and it has not yet been determined if there will be any impacts to those facilities.

The existing right-of-way along NH 101 is generally 100' wide. The proposed roadway width ranges from 72' to 106', exclusive of the grading required to match into the existing ground. This will require sliver acquisitions and easements to approximately 50 parcels. Easements will be needed for slope grading that extends beyond the proposed right-of-way. In addition, the right-of-way between Wallace Road and Constitution Drive will be converted to controlled access right-of-way. John explained that controlled access right-of-way would define the number of access points to NH 101 for each parcel. Through this process, we are generally not looking to eliminate driveways, but to prevent future proliferation of additional driveways.

John reported that the project has an estimated construction cost of \$12 million, not including right-of-way and engineering costs.

Victoria Chase concluded the formal presentation giving an overview of the project schedule. A public hearing will be held in the early fall which will be presided over by three executive councilors and three commission members. From there, the project will continue into final design with the goal to advertise for bids in late 2016. Construction would likely begin in 2017. Victoria conveyed that the informational meeting is the public's opportunity to express their recommendations and issues. Victoria noted that in order to make responsible choices, tough decisions will need to be made.

Steve Daly reported that it had been discussed to install a pedestrian overpass by Nashua Road. Steve reported that the Department and Town came to an understanding that a pedestrian overpass is not going to be included as part of this project, but the roadway improvements would be designed in a manner in which it would not inhibit the installation of one in the future.

Discussion:

Question: Elaine Tefft (Parcel #27) inquired how much of the \$12 million will the Town be responsible for paying.

Response: Victoria responded that the project is financed by Federal and State funds. Costs to the Town would only occur if Town utilities are impacted or improved, or if there are design features that the Town desires that are felt to be beyond the basic scope of the project.

Question: Elaine Tefft inquired if private property would be acquired through eminent domain.

Response: Victoria replied that the Department would prefer to work with the property owners with the hope to come to an agreement and not have to resort to eminent domain.

Question: Elaine Tefft asked how many crashes occurred in 2013 within the project limits.

Response: Subsequent to the meeting, it was determined that 2013 crash data is not yet available from Department of Safety. 2012 data can be researched and provided.

Question: Elaine Tefft inquired how traffic will be maintained during construction.

Response: Victoria responded that during construction, two-way traffic will be maintained on NH 101 and the impact to the traveling public will be minimized as much as practicable.

Comment: Elaine Tefft felt that having sidewalks along Route 101 is unsafe, but if one is going to be provided it should be on the southern side, not the northern side.

Question: Bob Lodico (Shaw Drive) inquired as to how long the project's construction will take.

- Response: Victoria responded that the project is not yet at a point in which the construction duration can be determined.
- Question: Bob Lodico asked what changes have been made to the plan since the last public informational.
- Response: Victoria responded that the Department has coordinated with the Town to define the location of access points and sidewalks; they have been added to the plan.
- Question: Bob Lodico inquired if roundabouts had been considered for this project.
- Response: John Butler responded that they had. What was concluded was that the roundabouts would have to be multilane and rather large. To construct them would require significant property impacts. The corridor study envisioned keeping and widening the existing signalized intersections.
- Comment: Bob Lodico noted that he was not supportive of the restriction of no left turns at Shaw Drive. Bob added that if Shaw Drive was to be restricted, he would rather have its access to NH 101 fully discontinued.
- Question: A resident inquired what the proposed posted speed limit would be.
- Response: John Butler responded that the existing posted speed limit of 40 mph will likely be retained.
- Question: A resident asked if NH 101 is improved, will it reduce traffic on side streets.
- Response: Victoria responded that side street traffic may see a reduction since some drivers will no longer feel the need to use side streets to avoid using NH 101.
- Question: A resident inquired if this project will simply relocate the traffic jam further west by Wallace Road where NH 101 reduces from four lanes to two.
- Response: John Butler reported that the traffic volume is a fair deal higher by NH 114/ NH 101 intersection versus NH 101/ Wallace Road intersection. John explained that the traffic volume is low enough to the west of Wallace Road so that the existing two lane roadway should have sufficient capacity. The purpose of this project is to address the area that experiences the most congestion.
- Comment: Anthony Yakovakis of Ethan Allen (Parcel #6) extended thanks for the work the Department and Town have done progressing this project. Anthony did express concern with access being maintained to the businesses on NH 101 during construction and the effect of the raised median to these businesses. *Subsequent to the meeting, Victoria Chase, Town Councilman Bill Jean, and Anthony Yakovakis*

discussed the right in/right out access proposed for the Ethan Allen driveway. It was encouraged that the Town work with the owners of Ethan Allen, Fireplace Village, and Modern Bride to explore alternatives, which may include a mutual access for all three businesses.

Question: Michael Chen (Shaw Drive) noted that he understands the need for access management along NH 101 and inquired if ‘U’ turns will be allowed at the signalized intersections.

Response: Victoria responded that ‘U’ turns will be allowed at signalized intersections for passenger cars. Larger vehicles will need to find alternative means to turn around.

Comment: Michael Chen noted that there are neighborhoods that would benefit from having a sidewalk along the southern side of NH 101 between Meetinghouse Road and Constitution Drive. Michael felt that if only one sidewalk is feasible along that stretch of NH 101, then it would be best served along the southern edge, or there should be provisions for mid-block crosswalks to get access to the northern side.

Question: A resident asked if future traffic volumes and growth were taken into consideration when performing the traffic study.

Response: John Butler responded that future traffic volumes were taken into consideration. Standard practice is to project the traffic volumes 20 years into the future based upon local growth trends.

Question: A resident inquired if the 4’ wide shoulder was sufficient for bicycle use.

Response: John Butler responded that the 4’ wide shoulder is the minimum width allowed for a shoulder on this type of highway that carries bicycle traffic.

Question: The resident inquired if the 10’ treatment ditch in between the sidewalk and shoulder gets narrowed, could the shoulder be widened.

Response: John Butler noted that it could be considered.

Comment: Kate Hanna (Parcel #38) reported that she recommends having a crosswalk across NH 101 at Meetinghouse Road intersection. Olivia Magueflor (Parcel #34) and other residents supported having a crosswalk at Meetinghouse Road.

Question: Melinda Chen (Shaw Drive) inquired if access for emergency vehicles to side streets blocked by the raised median (i.e. Shaw Drive) had been taken into consideration. She also supports having a sidewalk on the south side of NH 101.

- Response: Victoria reported the Department is actively coordinating with the Town to address emergency vehicles' needs. There will be provisions to allow emergency vehicles to drive across the median island in some locations.
- Comment: Tim Mayes (superintendent of schools) supported having sidewalks along NH 101 and recommended having a pedestrian tunnel to cross NH 101 by Nashua Road.
- Comment: Susan Tufts-Moore (Bedford Center Road) noted she was pleased with the proposed plan, including the pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Susan suggested including a sidewalk along Bedford Center Road from Liberty Hill Road to Bedford Village Inn to connect into the abandoned pony crossing. She recommended that an additional pedestrian underpass be constructed at Bell Hill Road.
- Comment: Manessa Lins (Parcel #43) noted that crossing NH 101 is a challenge and supports providing pedestrian crossings and having a sidewalk on the south side of NH 101. Manessa was concerned with the impacts to her property. She felt the removal of trees along her frontage would increase noise and reduce privacy. She also had concerns with the storm water treatment area proposed at the intersection of NH 101 and Liberty Hill Road.
- Question: Senator Andy Sanborn noted that in the past, it was discussed to have an interim project that would add turning lanes at Meetinghouse Road and at Wallace Road and was curious if that was still being considered.
- Response: Victoria responded that improving those intersections in the interim is no longer being considered since the ultimate project has been placed on an accelerated schedule.
- Comment: Susan Chandonnet (Parcel #54) expressed concern with the removal of trees along her frontage and the loss of privacy that would result. She was also not supportive of the Town taking the responsibility of landscape maintenance, and did not support having a sidewalk along her side of the road.
- Question: A resident inquired whether it could be considered to restrict right turning on red at Wallace Road intersection during the peak hours in order to prevent intersection blocking.
- Response: Victoria responded that the signal timings and signing will be developed later in the design process.
- Question: It was asked if a pedestrian underpass would be more expensive than a pedestrian overpass.

Response: Victoria responded that she did not know. Neither one is proposed as part of the project.

Comment: Amy Jenkins (Parcel #46) was concerned that the ledge removal will have negative effects on her well water. She also felt that improving the roadway would potentially invite more drivers to use the road and may increase noise. Amy noted that she had heard that landscaping could be used to mitigate noise impacts. *Prior to the meeting, Amy discussed with Victoria Chase her concerns with her well. Amy reported that her well is very sensitive to vibrations and gets rust particles when there are regional earth tremors.*

Response: Victoria responded that a noise analysis will be conducted. Victoria noted that landscaping would likely not be able to provide a meaningful reduction in noise but could be placed to reestablish privacy.

Comment: Jim Scanlon (Town council) expressed gratitude toward the Department for how the NHDOT has coordinated with the Town and has been receptive to the Town's desires and concerns.

Question: Michael Chen noted that the Town adopted a Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity Master Plan in early 2014. He asked if the proposed improvements match the recommendations of the connectivity plan. He asked if the shoulders would be marked with "sharrows", a marking to designate shared vehicle and bicycle use.

Response: Rick Sawyer (Bedford Planning Director) responded that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan envisioned separate bike and pedestrian paths on both sides of NH 101. He noted that the proposed improvements match the spirit of the connectivity plan, given the funding and right-of-way constraints, and construction of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities currently proposed would be a major achievement. Rick did not believe marking the shoulders with "sharrows" would be appropriate along NH 101, they are typically used for a shared vehicle/bicycle lane.

Discussions prior and subsequent to the formal meeting.

Thomas Barrett of Carlyle Place (Parcel #57) expressed concerns with the effect the raised island will have on customers, trucks, and emergency vehicles trying to access Carlyle Place. It was noted that the Department is currently studying possible emergency crossovers along the raised median and has not yet come to a conclusive design. Mr. Barrett was encouraged to continue working with the Town to explore access to Constitution Drive.

Victoria had a discussion with Rita Carroll and Jeanene Procopis who are trustees of the Bedford Land Trust. Victoria encouraged them to work with Marc Laurin regarding mitigation of impacts to the conservation easement properties.

Ken Solinsky inquired if the raised center median will be concrete, or grassed, and if grassed, will it have trees planted in it. Victoria responded that the median varies in width which dictates what type of surface treatment is available. It is anticipated the median will be grassed or landscaped where possible. The exact landscaping treatment will be determined further in the design and may include trees.

Marc Laurin had a discussion with Dana Finn and Mr. LaMontagne (Parcel #56) in regards to using the 4 acre parcel on Colonial Drive as a potential mitigation site. Marc noted that there may not be enough mitigation credit given to the DOT by the resource agencies to make this a cost-effective preservation site. Marc added that the site will be reviewed by the resource agencies to see if they find value in the parcel being placed in preservation, and the DOT does understand if the owners would like to pursue other opportunities and develop the site.

Marc Laurin discussed with Manessa Lins (Parcel #43) the potential historic property designation and the Section 106 Consulting Party process.

Marc Laurin discussed with Susan Tufts-Moore the Historic District determination and the Section 106 Consulting Party process. Marc also discussed briefly with Susan about the impacts to the Bedford Land Trust conservation land since she is a Trustee.

Elinore Dunham (Parcel #48) was concerned that the ledge blasting near her property may damage the windows in her house. The entire western side of her house is made up of large windows. She was also concerned with potential impacts to her well and outdoor propane tank from the ledge blasting.

Mr. Pease (Parcel #42) felt that the impacts to his property are relatively minor. He was concerned with potential impacts to his well, which is near NH 101, from the ledge blasting. He supports the removal of the northern Liberty Hill Road roadway, and expressed interest in acquiring the abandoned right-of-way. He was advised to contact the Town as Liberty Hill Road is a Town road.

Mr. Fortier (Parcel #37) was pleased to see that the impacts to his property are relatively minor. The potential stormwater treatment area on the corner of his property was explained. He supports the restriction of left turns out of Liberty Hill Road.

A representative of the Bedford Youth Performing Company, which leases Parcel #17, was concerned with potential loss of parking from the reconfiguration of the circular driveway. He wants to keep the ability for vehicles to circulate around the building. He noted that the property currently has a driveway onto NH 101, but it has been physically blocked by the property owner to prevent cut-through traffic from Bell Hill Road to NH 101. He was concerned with potential impacts to his business sign.

A representative of the Bedford Village Shoppes (Parcel #11) was pleased to see that there would be no impacts to the parking areas and no change in access to NH 101 or Chestnut Drive. He

was interested in connecting to the Town sewer, and was advised to speak with the Town officials regarding that issue.

Submitted by:



Steven J. Babalis, PE
Preliminary Design

Noted by: J. Butler

cc: W. Cass	R. Radwanski
W. Oldenburg	M. Laurin
V. Chase	M. Dugas
S. Babalis	J. Butler
C. Schmidt	Town of Bedford

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MEETING ATTENDANCE

PROJECT Bedford: NH Route 101 Widening from NH 114 to Wallace Rd

LOCATION Bedford High School

PROJECT NO. X-A000(143)

13953

Federal

State

Name	Agency or Address	Comments
DAVE COUGHLIN	276 BACK RIVER RD.	
LINDA GOLD	2 Elder Williams	
Justin M. Prince	3 Bedford Center Rd	
Chris Pappas	Exec Council	
Kate Hahnz	58 Bedford Center Rd	
Elaine Gamache	ENCORE 174 Rte 101	Thank you!
Heather Wilding	135 Nashua Rd	
OLIVIA MAGUEFLOR DUGAN	34 Meetinghouse Rd. B	
Bill + Evie REED	39 Pilgrim Drive	
Brian Connelly	196 Rt 101	
Kathy Shartzer	7 Roblin Rd.	
Richard Mostrom	33 Pinecrest Drive	
PAUL GOLDBERG	17 CHIPPING NOTION LANE.	
WILL SCANLON	TOWN COUNCIL	
BILL BERMODY	39 Birchwood Circle	
BRAD GEIGER	LOUIS BERGER GROUP	
Mick Fusbury	Louis Berger Group	
Teel Kitsis	6 Hastings Rd.	
Dean Wilson	69 Grafton Drive	
Susan Baroff	76 Bedford Center Rd	
Bgrinder Ahluwalia	14 Twin Brook Ln.	
Anna Giraldi	36 Cider Mill Rd	Went the traffic jam move to Wallace Rd going westbound in pm?
Jack Chen	74 Hitching Post Lane	
Laura Chen	24 Hitching Post Ln	Very glad to see sidewalks separated w/ grass and cross walk @
Bill Foote	14 Pheasant Run	
Nancy + Anthony Luomo	50 Bedford Center Rd.	
Ken Solinsky	59 Rollins Woods Dr.	

MEETING ATTENDANCE

PROJECT Bedford: NH Route 101 Widening from NH 114 to Wallace Rd
LOCATION Bedford High School
PROJECT NO. X-A000(143) 13953
 Federal State

Name	Agency or Address	Comments
Michael Chen	20 Shaw Dr	
Melinda Chen	20 Shaw Dr	
Tony GRANDE	23 Olde English Rd.	
John J Davis	17 Golden Dr.	
Jim Mayer	40 St. Andrews Drive	
John Brufonski	55 CONSTITUTION BEDFORD	
D. Bishop	2 CONSTITUTION DR.	
Kevin Fortier	3 Liberty Hill Rd	
Lisa Corbis Fortier	3 LIBERTY HILL ROAD	
Greg Zimmermann	86 BEDFORD CENTRAL PD	
Erik Toft	32 Oldfarm Rd	
Susan + Keith Chandonnet	9 Colonial Ave.	
Maressa Lins	2 Liberty Hill Rd	
Ed Murphy	Harvest Mkt Rt 101 Pkce	
Tim Merrill	Harvest Market Bedford	
Amy Jenkins	24 Bedford Ctr. Road	
GARY WINDOW	Shorty's	
Jay DeMonte	Stamps 206 Rt 101 W	
Gregg Stot	74 Pilgrim Rd	
Paul J. Roy	27 Shaw Dr.	
Allan Clam	Bedford Village Super	
Rita Carroll	41 Veronica Dr →	Bedford Land Trust
Jeanene Procopis	18 Rumford Ln →	
Susan Tutts-Moore	27 Bedford Center Rd	Bedford Land Trust + Bedford Village ^{Development} Comm. Committee
Anthony YAKOVAKIS	Ethan Allen	Bedford Land Trust and Bedford Historical Society
Richard M. Nault	Meetinghouse Dr + 101	
HUGH BISHOP	183 BEALS	ROUNDABOUTS!

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Need sewer lines + future water + Nat. Gas. Lines

Bedford Land Trust + Bedford Village ^{Development} Comm. Committee
 Bedford Land Trust and Bedford Historical Society

