February 1, 2008

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF HIGHWAY DESIGN

CONFERENCE REPORT

PROJECT: PELHAM 14491
(NH 111A, Improvements to Town Center Intersections)

DATE OF CONFERENCE: January 31, 2008

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: Pelham Police Community Conference Room

ATTENDED BY:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	OTHERS
Chris Waszczuk	(See Attached List)
Craig Green	
Trent Zanes	
Kevin Nyhan	
Christine Perron	

SUBJECT: Working Group Meeting #7

NOTES ON CONFERENCE:

Introduction
Chris Waszczuk welcomed everyone to the seventh Working Group meeting and began with attendee introductions. He noted the purpose of the this meeting was to discuss the refinements and additions to the dual roundabout concepts based on comments from the last Working Group meeting; discuss the impacts to the Fire Station with Alternative B; present the preliminary historic investigations; review the sign inventory and interim solutions; and discuss a report from the Communications Subcommittee.

Chris discussed how the project has progressed in the Project Development schedule. He pointed out that the project was in the Preliminary Design stage, and was being prepared to proceed to a formal Public Hearing in the spring. The next steps after the Public Hearing would include performing the final design (assuming there was a successful Public Hearing), developing right-of-way purchase plans to acquire the necessary property rights to construct and maintain the project, securing the environmental permits, and undertaking the construction, which is anticipated to begin in 2010.

Review of the Preferred Alternatives

Alternative Refinements

Bill Oldenburg presented the refinements to the plans based upon comments from the last Working Group meeting. He noted that the proposed Gibson Drive alignment had been shifted westerly to reduce impacts on the Lamontagne property. Bill pointed out that a tree line boulevard concept was still being proposed for Marsh Road. The Common Street layout was reconfigured from the plan that was shown at the last meeting to provide additional parking spaces, which are now proposed to be diagonal parking, and provide for some measure of traffic calming for the street. He noted the intersection radius onto Common Street from Marsh Road had been tightened to help in reducing the speeds entering onto Common Street. The alignment of Common Street at the intersection of Main Street was also adjusted to align Common Street to be more perpendicular to Main Street. This would require drivers to come to more of a stop condition at the intersection, and provide them an equal opportunity to turn either direction onto Main Street

Sidewalk Alternatives

Bill Oldenburg also reviewed the alternative sidewalk treatments and their costs. He noted that the project would construct approximately 4500 feet of sidewalks. The proposed sidewalk width is five (5) feet. The following sidewalk types were presented:

Sidewalk Type	Cost / Linear Foot	Total Project Cost
Asphalt	$7.50	$33,750
Imprinted Asphalt	$18.00	$81,000
Imprinted Asphalt (Colored)	$20.00	$90,000
Concrete	$27.75	$125,000

Chris Waszczuk felt the concrete sidewalk for the Pelham center could be justified as part of the project because of the center's historic village setting, and if determined appropriate through consultation with the Town and NH Division of Historic Resources.

There was considerable discussion on the different types of sidewalks, with each type having various advantages and disadvantages. Asphalt was felt to be less durable, but also less costly, and the difference in costs could be used on other items of the project. Imprinted and colored asphalt was felt to be attractive, but the imprint and color were noted to be susceptible to wear and would not last. The concrete was felt to be the most durable, but the cost and the urban look was noted as a disadvantage.

The issue of maintenance of the sidewalks was also discussed. Jeff Gowen noted the Town would need to purchase snow removal equipment for the sidewalk (need a warrant article in 2010). Bill Oldenburg also noted that the sidewalks would be constructed by the project, but the maintenance of the sidewalks would be the responsibility of the Town. Bill explained that the Town would need to sign a maintenance agreement accepting their responsibility for summer and winter maintenance of the sidewalks.

Action: Chris Waszczuk agreed to provide Jeff Gowen a sample of the maintenance agreement that Jeff could discuss with the Selectmen.

Estimated Project Cost

Chris Waszcuk discussed the total project costs. It was noted that the total construction cost for the project was estimated to be approximately $2, 950,000. The engineering costs were estimated at $350,000, and the remainder of the "earmarked funds" would be allocated for the acquisition of the right-of-way needed for the project. A portion of the right-of-way funding could be used to compensate for the impacts to the fire station. Chris stressed that the total project cost was capped at $3,937,500, and that no additional funding was available. This funding consists of the two federal earmarks received for the project, which is 80% federal and 20% matching funds (which would be state match, except in the instance when right-of-way funds would be used as compensation towards the fire station). Chris noted that the utility impacts were unknown at this time. However, if Town owned utilities were impacted by the project and the utility was within the Town compact, the associated costs would be a participating cost of the project.

Question: If the Town wished to extend the water line down Gibson Drive, could it be included in the project.
Answer: Chris explained the extension of the waterline could be included, however it would be a non-participating cost, meaning the Town would be responsible for the full cost of the waterline extension, including any engineering costs.

Chris noted that relocations of utility services generally take a considerable amount of time and could take upwards of a year. This generally is a concern as the roadway contractor is not able to perform certain work until the utilities are relocated. With that said, any significant utility relocation could result in the construction time frame being extended. At this time, it is estimated that the project's construction would entail two full construction seasons to account for utility relocations.

Fire Station

Chief Mike Walker provided his assessment of the alternatives as they affected the fire station. He provided the following:

I have reviewed the plans Pelham 14491, Dual Roundabouts Alternative B and discussed this option with my officer staff. Unfortunately, we could find nothing positive about this proposed arrangement. We respectfully submit the following observations:

- *Our emergency response needs require we exit vehicles from both sides of the building. This present arrangement is less than desirable due to traffic confusion caused by us entering the street from two different directions. The Alternative B arrangement would seal off our front exit, further degrading our response time. No matter how we arrange our vehicles, during a call, we would have to move one or two vehicles out of the fire station; park them out of the way and get back in the vehicle needed for response. This will greatly deteriorate response time, cause confusion and safety concerns.*
- *Even if a shed structure were to be built on the other property, we would be responding with vehicles facing each other, and be exiting in the same direction as call back responders are entering. In addition, the proposed auxiliary structure is shown located on private property* (which was noted to have protective covenants restricting the property's use).

- *This proposal significantly reduces parking. The fire station is a public building and routinely has public events. This would severely degrade citizen use of a public building.*
- *All office spaces and customer service areas would have to be reversed by a full remodeling of the building, to accommodate public access and emergency drive ups.*
- *In reviewing the limited original plans for the current station, it would appear the proposed Alternative B road would go over the septic field.*
- *The entire vehicle exhaust system would have to be removed and reinstalled.*
- *Extensive drainage for vehicle fluids and other runoff would have to be constructed.*
- *Current regulations for decontamination would have to be built in to the station and for the annex structure.*
- *The current building does not meet acceptable fire codes, electrical or plumbing codes. The proposed alternative B would eliminate two exits from the station, which would further degrade life safety regulations. Under the Alternate B proposal it would seem extremely difficult to bring the building into any code compliance unless it was completely remodeled to meet current life safety codes, and modern standards for fire apparatus. During the past several years of exploring options for a new central fire station, engineers have already indicated this would not be cost effective.*

I respectfully recommend we proceed with Alternative A, which calls for a removal of the present fire station, provides the town with a manageable traffic flow, and increases the aesthetics and public use of our town.

There was considerable discussion by the Working Group members on the issue of the fire station. The major concern was regarding the Town warrant article for a new fire station, planned to be brought for Town vote in March. If the warrant article did not pass, there was concern over merits of Alternative B, which was felt to be the less preferable alternative. There was concern that the uncertainty of passage of the warrant article would have a direct affect on whether the project should move forward. Some felt the project should be delayed until a new fire station was passed; others felt the project should be dropped if the fire station did not pass, particularly, if that meant that Alternative B would be progressed. Chris cautioned that because of the uncertainty of the federal highway trust shortfall, delaying the project too long, could lead to the potential loss of the federal funding "earmark". Chris noted that a federal earmark was recently rescinded on another Department project. Chris Waszczuk felt there should be a cost estimate developed for a renovation of the existing fire station and construction of an annex (fire station) that the public could compare with the cost of a new fire station.
Action: The Town will have a cost estimate developed for a renovation of the existing fire station and a new annex that can be used to compare with the cost of a new fire station.

It was agreed that before the Public Hearing for the roadway project is set, that the results of the vote on the warrant article at the March Town meeting should be known. It was agreed to hold another Working Group meeting on March 20 to determine the next steps

to take regarding the project, and scheduling the Public Hearing. Chris noted that a late May Hearing date was now likely. A Working Group member cautioned that the Hearing should not be delayed into June, as many people in town are unavailable due to summer time activities and vacations.

Preliminary Historic Investigation
Kevin Nyhan presented the preliminary historic investigation information that had been collected to date. He indicated that a district boundary survey had been completed, and will be submitted to the State Division of Historic Resources for their verification. He also discussed the remaining steps in the environmental investigation process that would need to be completed prior to the formal public hearing. An environmental document will be completed for the project and made available prior to the Public Hearing.

Comment: There was a comment that the Church was not interested in having the Trolley Barn identified as a historic resource as they were considering razing the building.
Answer: The identification of historic resources is completed for locating eligible historic resources and quantifying impacts related to the roadway project, since federal funds are involved. If the Church determined they were interested in razing the building and were intending to do it without federal funds being involved, they would need to meet local ordinances and requirements, not federal.

Sign Inventory and Interim Solutions
Bill Oldenburg reviewed the interim solutions that had been suggested at the last Working Group meeting. He explained that the four-way stop sign option at the Main St/Windham Rd/Nashua Rd intersection had already been modeled, and the results of the traffic simulation previously presented and discussed. He re-affirmed there are reservations with installing a four-way stop sign in this location due the high volume of traffic passing through the intersection. Placing a stop sign on Old Bridge St and Windham Rd would create long back-ups that would likely create safety problems in other locations (drivers trying to get out of side roads/driveways etc.), and frustration due to extremely long queues. It would also lead to a higher level of unexpectancy, and potential for more rear-end accidents.

Another interim option that was suggested was installing temporary signals. The problem with this option is with out providing for additional turn lanes, traffic will likely back up from vehicles trying to make left turns and having to wait for a gap in the on coming through traffic. Again this would cause extensive backups and create safety issues both at the intersection (people taking chances making a left turn) and at other locations (side roads and drives). There was a suggestion that each leg of the intersection have its own green phase. It was felt this would still result in long backups, potential of disrespect for the signal, and shifting the safety issues at the intersection to other locations. This condition was also modeled with the traffic simulation previously presented.

The NHDOT Bureau of Traffic had prepared a sign inventory to determine locations where the signing could be updated and improved. Bill Oldenburg presented the locations and the cost to replace the signs.

The Bureau of Traffic had also suggested the signing of traffic (to the center of the village) and timing of the signals at the two NH 38 intersections could be adjusted in an attempt to reduce the volume of traffic using Old Bridge Street. Additional left turn green time could be provided at the NH 38/Main Street intersection with less left turn green time at the NH 38/Old Bridge Street intersection, which would encourage the use of Main Street. This was felt to only minimally reduce the volume of traffic on Old Bridge Street and would likely increase traffic past the school on Main St. Jeff Gowen noted that the Town's Safety Committee is reviewing the potential benefits and drawbacks of this suggestion and will report the Committee's recommendations to the Select Board, who will in turn provide the Town's response to the recommendations.

Communication Subcommittee Report
It was agreed that this report should not be discussed until the next Working Group meeting, as the Town meeting outcome would have an affect on when the formal public hearing would be held.

Assignments
Chris Waszczuk suggested that the Town officials should consider sending letters regarding their position on the project, particularly for input into the public hearing.

Next Meeting
The next Working Group meeting will be held March 20 at 6:00 pm in the Pelham Police Training Room.

Submitted by:

Craig A. Green, PE
Administrator

Noted by: WJO, CMW

cc: W. Cass
C. Waszczuk
W. Oldenburg
Tom Gaydos, Pelham Town Administrator

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PELHAM 14491 Working Group Meeting

Attendance List January 31, 2008

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

	Joyce E. Mason	Council on Aging
	Phil Currier	Hist. Soc. & Cong. Church
	Father Bob	St. Pats
	Herman Hanson	Veterans
X	Eleanor Burton	Schools
	Marc Duquette	Center Resident
	Linda Stecchi	Center Resident
✓	Shirley Sutton	Center Resident
	John Crane	Pelham Funeral Home - Business
	Michael Marion	Center Business Owner
X	Leo Thibault	Former NRPC Commissioner
	Mary Robin Bousa	Planning Board
✓	Dave Hennessey	Zoning Board of Appeals
	Paul Dadak	Conservation Commission
	Jean-Guy Bergeron	Selectman/State Rep
✓	Hal Lynde	Selectman
	Tom Gaydos	Town Administrator
	Evan Haglund	Police Chief
✓	Mike Walker	Fire Chief
✓	Jeff Gowan	Planning Director
✓	Jim Lamontagne	Citizen
✓	Cliff Hayes	Citizen
✓	Tim Roache	NRPC
	Linda Wilson	NHDHR
✓	Chris Waszczuk	NH DOT

NHDOT AND NRPC STAFF

	Kerrie Diers	NRPC - Facilitator
✓	Craig Green	NH DOT - Admin. Highway Design
✓	Bill Oldenburg	NH DOT - Preliminary Deisgn
✓	Trent Zanes	NH DOT - Preliminary Design
✓	Kevin Nyhan	NH DOT - Environ. Coordinator

PELHAM 14491 Working Group Meeting

Attendance List January 31, 2008

	NAME	CONTACT INFO
	DIANE BRUNELLE	SENIORS
	Bob Haverty	BOS