



McFARLAND JOHNSON

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MEETING NOTES

PROJECT: CONCORD 29601 - Improvements at Interstate 89 Exit 2 (MJ Project No: 18415.01) **DATE OF MEETING:** Feb. 11, 2021

LOCATION: ZOOM **TIME:** 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

SUBJECT: Alternative Review & Public Feedback

ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT: T. Reynolds R. Martin C. Poire

MJ: B. Colburn S. Ireland C. Perron S. Lister

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Interstate 89 Exit 2 in Concord provides access to NH 13 (Clinton Street) to the east leading towards Concord Hospital and Downtown Concord and to the west leading towards Bow and Dunbarton. It has become apparent that problems exist at the Interstate ramp terminus intersections as vehicles have been routinely seen to queue to the nose of the Interstate-89 northbound off-ramp. Silk Farm Road and Iron Works Road are in close proximity to the Exit 2 ramp terminus intersections and the traffic operations of the four intersections influence one another. A project is currently programmed in the Ten-Year plan for the Interstate 89 Ramp Terminus at Exit 2 on Clinton Street to address the safety concerns related to queuing traffic on the off-ramps.

NOTES ON MEETING:

NHDOT began the meeting by reviewing standard Zoom practices and with a poll to find out how the public became aware of the meeting; results for each poll will be included at the end of this memorandum. NHDOT then introduced the presenters and panelists for the presentation: Tobey Reynolds (presenter), and Rebecca Martin (panelist) from NHDOT and Steven Ireland (presenter), Christine Perron (presenter), and Brian Colburn (panelist) from McFarland Johnson (MJ).

NHDOT began the presentation by reviewing the goals of the meeting; to give the public an overview of the project, relay the funding constraints and to convey the project schedule and development of alternatives, progressing to the preferred options. During the overview of the project NHDOT showed an aerial imagine and discussed the queueing and safety issues which are the impetus for the project. This was followed by a brief discussion of the funding available in the Ten-Year Plan (TYP) including an explanation of the discrepancy between the amount shown in the TYP and the amount available for construction which is due to inflation. The presentation was then handed off to MJ.

MJ described the existing conditions, showing a figure taken from modeling software that was used to analyze the traffic operations to show that the extent of the queueing in the analysis matched the reported

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queueing. MJ then discussed the crash history over a ten-year period from 2006-2016, highlighting that due to the 6% grade of NH-13 and the relatively high traveling speeds of the Interstate traffic, crashes at the off-ramps have a potential to be more severe. The data indicates that of the 84 crashes reported in that time, crashes are trending to be associated more frequently with the Interstate traffic in recent years, which is cause for concern. MJ then showed a figure of the Interstate bridge crossing over NH-13 and explained how the bridge creates a width constraint for improving traffic operations at both Interstate off-ramps. The bridge has NHDOT's highest rating for bridge conditions and is not anticipated to require significant renovations for the next few decades. This width constraint, combined with the need to maintain shoulder widths for cyclists and pedestrians, means the maximum number of lanes under the bridge is constrained to three (3).

MJ then discussed the natural and cultural resources in the project vicinity, indicating that while the project is located between state forests, and adjacent to wetlands, there were no anticipated impacts to the state forests and only minimal potential impacts to wetlands associated with drainage work. All appropriate permits would be obtained prior to construction. The project would be adding pavement to the watershed and a stormwater treatment area will be constructed to treat stormwater runoff from at least a portion of the project. Historic resources that have been identified consist of a stone wall along the right of way north of the interchange, as well as the property located to the west of the interchange (Parcel 93-4-1). According to tax records, the structure on this parcel was originally constructed in 1860, which makes it a potentially historic property. Neither this parcel nor the stone wall will be impacted by the project so the need for further review of these resources is not anticipated. Additionally, the project is located within areas that have been previously disturbed and is considered to have low potential for buried archaeological resources. Public input on any natural or cultural resources is welcome and, in particular, input on the presence of any other historic resources, including structures over 50 years old or buried archaeological resources. Any information or concerns regarding these resources, can be brought to the attention of the project team. It was also noted that anyone with a demonstrated interest in effects to historic resources can request to become more formally involved in project review as a consulting party. A link to more information on that process was provided.

MJ then reviewed the project schedule from the initial alternative development in 2019-2020 through the anticipated start of construction in 2023. The presentation turned to the process of the proposed alternative development and progression. MJ developed multiple alternatives for this project and showcased six (6) for this presentation. MJ walked through each of the first five (5) alternatives; NB Off Ramp Widening, Signalized Existing Lanes, Single Lane Roundabouts, Expanded Signals, Hybrid Roundabouts explaining the pros/cons of each alternative including cost, projected queue lengths, constructability, safety, and projected design life (a combination of Level of Service (LOS) and queueing/safety). MJ presented comments from meetings with the City of Concord (the City), the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) and the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) on these alternatives. The response from these meetings focused on the immediate need at the northbound Interstate offramp. The southbound Interstate offramp is not projected to be of equal concern until approximately 2032, should traffic grow as projected. The City, RPC and TPAC also expressed concerns for bicyclist and pedestrian safety and expressed the desire to slow vehicle speeds down the hill towards Concord. MJ showed a figure of the existing pedestrian facilities under the bridge and reiterated the bridge constraint. At this time, the second poll was conducted to gauge public support for increased pedestrian infrastructure. The results are shown at the end of this memorandum.

Following the poll, MJ showed a figure comparing the number of conflict points between a 4-way signal-controlled intersection and a 4-way roundabout. This figure shows that roundabouts inherently have fewer conflict points, and thus are less likely to have severe crashes occur. This was part of a discussion on safety improvements at the intersections. Both signaling and adding a roundabout are anticipated to reduce crash potential at the intersections. After this discussion MJ reviewed the final proposed alternative, Hybrid Roundabout at NB On/Off Only. This alternative was developed in response to The City and TPAC comments and only addresses the northbound Interstate on/off ramps, however the design life at this intersection extends beyond the 20-year design horizon which is the typical design life period.

MJ then reviewed the two (2) preferred alternatives; Signalized Existing Lanes and Hybrid Roundabout at NB On/Off Only, comparing them in a pair of design matrices for years 2032 and 2042 with the existing conditions as the base of comparison. At this time, the third poll was given; to choose between the two preferred alternatives or to do nothing. The results are shown at the end of this memorandum.

MJ then showed potential bicycle and pedestrian improvements that could be added to each of the previous alternatives, stressing that, due to the roadway grade, a multi-use path would provide the best accommodations for any roundabout alternative. MJ specified that should any sidewalks or multi-use paths be included in the project, any maintenance would be the responsibility of the City of Concord. MJ then showed a figure of the Hybrid Roundabout at NB On/Off Only with a multi-use path on both sides of NH-13. The fourth poll was given at this time; to gauge public response to the inclusion of combined pedestrian/bicyclist facility improvements. The results are shown at the end of this memorandum.

NHDOT reviewed meeting protocols for the question/answer portion of the meeting and provided contact information and the project website. Question/Answer portion was opened at this time.

Question/Answer:

1. Prefers Hybrid at NB and accommodating bike/ped
Concerned with NB onramp high speed slip-lane – would like to investigate making traffic slower – prefers sharper yield condition for on ramp
 - a. Speed management at the slip-ramp entrance will be investigated further in Final Design
 - b. NHDOT was hoping for comments/feedback on the slip-ramp and acknowledges the potential conflict with bicyclists and pedestriansAccommodate road race in the summer during construction (Bill Luti 5 Miler - <https://www.gsr.com/luti/>)
2. Concern for impacts to Silk Farm Rd – improvements?
 - a. Some improvements were considered in the analysis and can be investigated further as Final Design progresses.
3. How often will the queue back up?
 - a. During Peak Hours
4. Has there been any accommodations for the snowmobile trail?
 - a. There is no record of this trail in the public NH records.
 - Rep Rebecca Williams may know.

No further questions/comments were submitted and NHDOT conducted the final poll; to rate the performance of the public information meeting via Zoom. The results are shown at the end of this memorandum.

Key Comments:

1. Public preference was overwhelmingly for the Hybrid Roundabout at NB On/Off Only alternative.
2. There is public support for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements.
3. There is strong public support for a multi-use path in the event that a roundabout is built.

Poll Results:

Poll 1

How did you find out about tonight's meeting?

- a. City Meeting Notice
- b. Social Media
- c. Word of Mouth

- d. **NHDOT Project Letter**
- e. NHDOT Website Announcement
- f. Other

POLL 2

How important are pedestrian facilities to you at this location?

- a. **very important** (39%)
- b. somewhat important (17%)
- c. neutral (33%)
- d. not important (11%)

POLL 3

What option would you prefer?

- a. Signalized option for both intersections (17%)
- b. **Roundabout at NB only** (83%)
- c. Do Nothing (0%)

POLL 4

With the roundabout option how important is providing a multi-use path to allow Bikes to travel outside the roundabout?

- a. **very important** (57%)
- b. somewhat important (18%)
- c. neutral (24%)
- d. not important (1%)

POLL 5

How would you rate your experience with this evening's virtual meeting?

- a. Poor
- b. **Very Good**

Submitted by:

Scott Lister, EIT
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