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Meeting Minutes Memo

Loudon 16188-NH 106 Interim Corridor Assessment Public Information Meeting on August 15, 2012 Loudon Town Hall

Attendees:

Keith Cota	NHDOT
Mike Dugas	NHDOT
Marc Laurin	NHDOT
Susan Soucie	NHDOT
Jamie Sikora	FHWA
Mike Long	McFarland-Johnson (MJ)
Darren Benoit	MJ
Jeff Santacruce	MJ

A Public Information Meeting was held to present the results of the studies and the preliminary plans in order to gather public input.

The NHDOT and MJ presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining the history of the project from the original 1995 Environmental Assessment, the factors that were considered during the preparation of the current environmental review and traffic analysis, and the design approach for the proposed future improvements. The presentation also discussed the next steps for the project, the overall cost of the project, and identified potential funding sources to advance this project to construction.

After the presentation, the NHDOT opened the meeting up to questions and comments from the audience. Several residents voiced concerns about spending additional money to upgrade Route 106, which they indicated was one of the best maintained roads in the State, when secondary roads such as Route 129, Baptist Road, and Shaker Road are in such disrepair. Those audience members indicated that those roadways should be considered a higher priority. NHDOT indicated that since there is no funding shown for this project in the Ten Year Plan, Route 106 would need to compete with these and other similar roadways across the state for future funding before anything could be designed or built. It was reiterated that funding could come forward in three ways to partially or fully fund the improvements: 1) 10-year State Transportation Program; 2) public/private partnering; and/or 3) Highway Safety Improvement Program. In addition, NHDOT explained that to move this project to construction would require a three step process. The first step would be to secure funding for the project, second would be to begin engineering design and ROW assessment, and the third would be to hold a formal public hearing on the project.



Some residents indicated that this project was only moving forward because it would benefit the track. NHDOT explained that this project focused on the safety and operations of the roadway for commuters and the residents of Loudon who used Route 106 on a daily basis.

The majority of the audience expressed their support of the recommendation to install traffic signals at the Staniels Road and Chichester Road intersections as the first priority. Many indicated that these are the most unsafe areas. Most of the audience indicated that they would like to see these improvements move forward as soon as possible even if it was separate from the overall project. NHDOT mentioned that they are in the process of reviewing the safety of these intersections to determine if either one would qualify for Highway Safety Improvement Program funds, which may allow them to get constructed sooner.

One resident expressed his concern that many of the citizens of Loudon were not present at the meeting and may not know what is going on. He suggested that handouts or better access to plans should have been provided before the meeting and should be considered before any future meetings to help get the word out so that all the residents would have a say in what gets built, if anything. NHDOT indicated that all of the study information and plans have been posted on the DOT website. The website address, project manager contact information and location of the information were provided. The NHDOT also indicated that copies of the study documents were provided to the Town and agreed to provide additional copies of the documents for their use in disseminating the information to interested property owners. In addition, the NHDOT left the copy of the large scale plans that were presented at the meeting with the Town for their use.

Several residents voiced concerns about the speed limits along the corridor and asked if any consideration was given to down posting the roadway. NHDOT indicated that their experience has shown that many times down posting a roadway such as Route 106, which is relatively straight, flat and wide has no effect on the actual travel speeds observed along the roadway because drivers will drive at the speed they feel is comfortable. The residents followed up by asking if the speed limits at the proposed signal locations would be lowered like they are at Route 129. The NHDOT indicated that their policy on high speed roadways such as this is to lower the speed limit near the signalized intersections.

The NHDOT District 3 Assistant District Engineer informed the audience that during routine roadway painting operations, set to occur this summer, the NHDOT would be eliminating two existing passing zones on Route 106. The first zone is adjacent to the Loudon Country Club heading north and the second zone is located adjacent to the south track entrance heading north. The audience seemed in agreement with the closing of those passing zones and indicated it may help reduce accidents.

NHDOT closed the formal meeting and indicated that their staff and MJ would remain to answer any questions on the plans or the project as a whole. In sidebar conversations, several residents expressed concerns on how the project would affect their individual properties. Some asked questions about access to their property, while others were concerned with tree cutting and noise impacts to their properties.



In summary, some elements of the project, such as intersection improvements, were perceived positively, with many attendees wanting to know how soon they could get built. Also, the audience was generally supportive of the narrowing of the original 1995 Environmental Assessment's proposed typical section from five lanes to three.

Cc: File
Loudon Board of Selectmen
Canterbury Board of Selectmen
Concord City Manager