



Attendees: See Attached List

Date/Time: 1/10/02 7:00 PM

Project No.: 51272

Place: Plaistow Town Hall

Re: NH 125 Plaistow-Kingston
Advisory Task Force Meeting # 1

Notes taken by: Marty Kennedy

Welcome and Introductions

Chris Waszczuk welcomed all the Advisory Task Force (ATF) members and reviewed the meeting agenda. Chris also distributed a package (attached) that included the meeting agenda, a summary of the role of the ATF, guidelines for conducting ATF meetings, an outline of problem identification within the project development process, and sample Purpose and Need Statements from other recent projects. He then asked each of the members to introduce themselves.

Committee's Role and Responsibilities

Chris proceeded to discuss the role of the ATF and guidelines for conducting ATF meetings. The role of the ATF is to 1) represent the concerns and interest of the community, 2) review and comment on work conducted throughout the study, 3) meet on average every other month throughout the study, to provide information relative to the concerns of the community for inclusion in the study, and 4) to discuss information and issues with community leaders and the general public.

As for meeting protocol, the formal business portion of the meeting should be limited to a discussion of members only. By consensus vote, the ATF can recognize individuals with pertinent information. Following presentations, ATF business, and member discussions, the meeting should be opened for public discussion with the following rules.

- Limit public discussion period to no more than ½ to 1 hour to keep meetings to not much more than 2 to 2 ½ hours. No speakers after 9:00 PM.
- Initially, Public discussion should be limited to issues presented during first part of the meeting (or regarding agenda related items). Should time allow, general public discussion will be accepted.

Anyone wishing to address the board on a specific issue should contact the Chairman through Committee members to be placed on the agenda.

Chris suggested that Glen Greenwood of the Rockingham Planning Commission serve as the ATF Chairman. The members agreed. Glen agreed to accept the role and was selected as Chairman.

Comments relating to the ATF function included:

- Merilyn Senter suggested that if the meetings were held in this room, they could be covered by the local cable TV. Chris suggested that it would be best since the project involved both Towns if the meetings were rotated with half held in Plaistow and half held in Kingston.
- Leigh Komornick noted that Steve Ranlett was unable to attend tonight's meeting because he was out of town.
- Leigh Komornick questioned whether Route 125 was on the National Highway System (NHS). (Subsequent to the meeting, Chris confirmed that the corridor was on the NHS.)
- Chris suggested that the ATF use e-mail to communicate meeting notices, distribute meeting minutes etc. Chris passed a sheet of paper out to the members asking them to write down their e-mail address. Most of the members noted their accessibility to e-mail. For those without e-mail addresses, information will be faxed.
- Glen asked if a copy of the scope of work for each task could be distributed to each of the ATF members. Chris and Marty Kennedy said that they would put something together and distribute it at the next meeting.
- Leigh Komornick asked why this project did not include the southern end of the NH 125 corridor where the town is considering upgrading the Hazeltine Street and Cushing Avenue intersections. Note that the Cushing Ave. intersection is in Massachusetts. Chris noted that the project limits evolved from the NH125 Feasibility Study (completed in 1999) and corridor improvements from the East Road intersection in Plaistow to the Main Street intersection in Kingston were fully funded. A separate project to address the southern section of NH125 is included in the State's 10-Year Transportation Improvement Program. Chris also noted that he didn't think that the NHDOT would be funding an upgrade to a MA intersection.
- Merilyn Senter noted that she has heard that a number of large box retail development projects are looking at sites along the corridor. Chris and Marty noted that information relative to those projects is important and will need to be considered as the project evolves.

NH 125 Corridor Issues

Marty Kennedy then proceeded to provide a brief presentation describing the limits of the project, existing conditions, corridor deficiencies, and issues and opportunities.

Marty noted that the Feasibility Study, which was completed in 1999, documented safety and operational deficiencies, estimated future travel demand, and recommended an interim and a long-term improvement plan for the corridor. The improvement plan outlined a number of access management strategies that will be evaluated in detail in this study.

Some of the deficiencies that were noted included the lack of turn lanes, operational deficiencies, poor alignment/sight lines, and the existence of numerous uncontrolled curb-cuts. Marty noted that two of the interim actions (Main Street turn lanes and the left turn lane at Old Coach Road) are complete and operate well.

The long-term plan consisted of providing two through lanes in each direction on NH 125 from East Road northward to the Hunt Road/Newton Junction Road intersection. The segment north of Hunt Road would continue as one through lane in each direction, although the section would be upgraded to widen shoulders and, where needed, improve the vertical and horizontal alignment. In addition, each of the major intersections along the corridor would have an exclusive left-turn lane in addition to the through lanes. The long-term plan that was presented in the Feasibility Study also identified a number of connector roadways that would provide access to traffic signals for existing as well as future land use along the corridor.

Marty noted that new traffic volume counts were conducted along the corridor. The new traffic volume data do not show much growth over the last few years.

Marty also noted that an important issue relative to the Hunt Road/Newton Junction Road upgrade will be the existence of two historical structures at the intersection. Our preliminary investigation suggests that the Guptill House, an 18th century Georgian Cape located on the east side of NH 125 south of Newton Junction Road, would be eligible for the National Register. The Troy House, located on the west side of NH 125 opposite the Guptill House, may also be eligible. Marc Laurin explained that on projects such as NH 125 where federal funds are being used, we will need to demonstrate that we have done everything possible to avoid or minimize and mitigate the impact to a structure that is eligible for the National Register.

Access Management

Marty showed the members a 10-minute video on access management that was produced by the NHDOT. Chris provided each town a copy of the video. Following the viewing of the video, there was a brief discussion on the importance of access management. Marty told the committee that there will be a number of public meetings and workshops throughout the spring and summer on the subject of access management. It will be important that the committee members understand the concept of access management before we introduce it to the public.

Comments relating to access management included:

- Marilyn Senter suggested that the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) for coordinating driveway permitting and siteplan and subdivision review between the State and the Towns be reviewed and possibly executed.
- Glen Greenwood noted the importance of access management; however he stressed a well thought out, comprehensive plan will be necessary to address the “smaller developers” and abutting land owners desiring to access the highway with the intent of minimizing their financial outlay.

Project Schedule & Purpose and Need

Chris passed out a draft copy of the project schedule to the committee members. Chris stressed that the schedule is *draft* and is subject to change. He also noted that the targeted timeframes for meetings and completion of tasks were highly aggressive. Early identification of project issues and early involvement of the public and project stakeholders will be important to progress the project forward in a timely manner. Chris also briefly discussed the importance of preparing a Purpose and Need Statement for the project. Glen Greenwood asked if that was something that the committee was to prepare. Chris said that the Department and VHB would prepare a draft statement and ask the committee to review and comment on it.

Next Meeting

The next ATF meeting was scheduled for Thursday February 14th at 6:30 PM in the Plaistow Town Hall.