



Attendees: See Attached List

Date/Time: 2/14/02 7:00 PM

Project No.: 51272

Place: Plaistow Town Hall

Re: NH 125 Plaistow-Kingston
Advisory Task Force Meeting # 2

Notes taken by: Marty Kennedy

Committee Business

Glenn Greenwood opened the meeting and welcomed all of the committee members to the second ATF meeting. Glenn asked for a motion to accept the 1/10/02 ATF meeting notes. The motion was moved by Marilyn Senter and seconded by Chief Briggs.

Marilyn asked if we should get the conservation commissions more involved in the project. Glenn asked if the Conservation Commissions should be involved in the resource agency meetings. Chris Waszczuk thought that was a good idea and he would ensure they were invited to any resource agency meetings held for the project by the Department. In addition, Chris suggested that they should also be invited to the ATF meetings. Chris suggested that the Conservation Commissions be added to the mailing list. Chief Briggs asked what was the outcome of the 1/16/02 Resource Agency meeting. Chris explained that it went well and that we were successful in our request to advance the Hunt Road/Newton Junction Road design. Separate public meetings, Public Hearing, and environmental documentation will be required for the intersection project.

Project Status

Marty Kennedy stated that we have completed our data collection effort, have prepared our base plans and conducted the existing condition operational and safety analyses.

Average weekday traffic volumes were recorded along NH 125 at:
23,000 vpd north of East Road,
13,400 vpd south of Old County Road,
14,900 vpd south of Newton Junction Road, and
12,400 vpd north of Old Coach Road.

Marty presented a series of charts summarizing the daily and hourly traffic volume variations throughout the corridor. It was noted that the daily volume (south of Newton Junction Road) was relatively consistent on weekdays (14,500 vpd to 15,700 vpd). The daily volume on a Saturday was also relatively high (14,200 vpd). The lowest volume was recorded on Sunday (10,700 vpd).

A review of the hourly traffic volume trends revealed a typical AM and PM peak commuter pattern at the count locations along the north end of the corridor, while the south end of the corridor showed higher PM peak volumes, which reflects the commercial activity located at the south end of the corridor.

The results of the operational analyses showed the following intersections operating at poor levels of service (LOS E or F) under existing conditions:

- Old Road
- Danville Road
- Jesse George Road
- Old County Road
- Kingston Road
- Newton Junction Road/Hunt Road

The NH 111 Connector Road signalized intersection operates at a good level of service (LOS B), while the signalized East Road and Main Street intersections each operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS C).

A review of accident data for the most recent 5-year period revealed the following high accident intersection locations:

- Main Street (60 accidents)
- Danville Road/Jesse George Road (35 accidents)
- Hunt Road/Newton Junction Road (33 accidents)
- East Road (22 accidents)
- Old County Road (22 accidents)

Chris proceeded to discuss the outcome of the Department's meeting with the cultural resource agencies regarding the Hunt Road/Newton Junction Road intersection. Chris explained that the current vision for the Hunt Road and Newton Junction Road intersection is to align both roadways to form a single 4-way signalized intersection. NH 125 would likely need to be widened to a 5-lane cross section consisting of two through lanes and an exclusive left-turn lane in each direction.

The Guptill House, located on the west side of NH 125 south of Hunt Road is a historically significant structure. The resource agencies have asked that the Department minimize impacts to that property. As a result, we will likely be investigating widening on the east side of NH 125 and looking to hold the alignment of Hunt Road as much as possible and realign Newton Junction Road opposite Hunt Road.

Chief Briggs asked that we consider improving the crest on Newton Junction Road situated approximately 850 feet of NH 125.

Chris indicated that we are currently finalizing conceptual alternatives for the intersection. They will be reviewed by the Front Office at the NHDOT on February 25th and we would be ready to present them at the next ATF meeting or a public officials meeting in mid-March.

Ellen Faulconer noted that a developer is currently before the Kingston Planning Board with a project on the Landscaper's Depot property, which is south of Newton Junction Road. The Planning Board may ask VHB to review the plan for the town from an access management perspective.

Access Management

Marty Kennedy provided a brief presentation on access management. The presentation included:

What is access management?

Access Management balances mobility and access, so as to improve the efficient movement of traffic while enhancing the safe and efficient access to/from abutting properties.

Primary Benefits

- Provides safer and more efficient access to properties
- Increases Roadway Capacity by 25 - 30%
- Extends functional life of the existing roadway
- Reduces the need to spend tax dollars on capacity expansion
- Reduces travel and delay times by 40 - 60%
- Decreases energy consumption by 35 - 50 %
- Reduces vehicle emissions
- Maintains a community's existing character

Implementation Strategies

- Must be straightforward, coordinated, and consistently applied
- Need to balance landowners' rights with public's need for safety and convenience
- Requires coordination between the towns and the NHDOT
- Incorporate plan into town masterplan
- Incorporate plan into town's zoning, subdivision regs. and site plan review

Available Tools

- Provide Left-turn lanes, locate signalized intersections
- Install raised median
- Connect adjacent properties, provide service roads

- Locate driveways away from major intersections
- Reduce the number of driveways
- Reduce the width and increase the throat length of driveways
- Straighten driveway alignment
- Provide uniform signing

Commonly Applied Case Law

- Complete loss of access is always a taking
- Substantial loss of access may result in a taking
- Loss of most convenient access is not usually considered a taking if other suitable access exists
- Installing a raised median is not a taking
- Damages must be specific to a property to be a taking, not to the public at large

Marty also presented an example of site plan in the town of Bedford where the project applicant was asked and agreed to provide an internal connection to an adjacent parcel.

Chris distributed a draft copy of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and described the responsibilities of the town and the NHDOT.

Ellen Faulconer questioned if the memorandum of understanding would be enforceable. She felt that project applicants would still obtain their driveway permits from the NHDOT, which by law the state must provide. Chris explained that the MOU states that the "Department shall agree to abide by the adopted site specific access management requirements of the Town to the extent that they are consistent with safe and efficient highway design..... and shall withhold final action on any driveway access permit application for a proposed development until the Town Planning Board has formally approved the access plan for that development." Chris also cautioned that the Draft MOU was being reviewed by the Attorney General's Office and may be revised.

Merilyn suggested that the state legislature adopt an RSA that requires conformity to a corridor access management plan in communities where access management plans have been adopted.

Chris proceeded to distribute copies of excerpts of various technical material on the subject of access management including:

National Cooperative Highway Research Program (Report 420) - Impacts of Access Management

National Cooperative Highway Research Program (Synthesis 289) - Corridor Management

Economic Impacts of Access Management

Chris discussed the safety and travel time benefits of access management as well as some of the techniques such as providing left-turn lanes, the importance of traffic signal spacing, medians, corner clearances, as well as policy considerations.

Merilyn noted the continued problem of traffic using other local streets to avoid the congestion on NH 125. Chris suggested that the upgrade and improved capacity of NH 125 would reduce the desire for motorists to seek alternate routes.

Next Meeting

The next ATF meeting was scheduled for Thursday March 14th at 6:30 PM in the Kingston Town Hall to be followed by a Public Officials meeting at 7:00 PM.

It was agreed that the first item of discussion for the next ATF meeting after normal committee business would be Draft Purpose and Need Statement, Problem identification.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:44 pm.