



Meeting Notes

Attendees: See Below

Date/Time: September 17, 2002 8:00 AM

Project No.: 51272
Plaistow-Kingston 10044-B

Place: Plaistow Public Library

Re: NH 125 Plaistow-Kingston
Access Management Presentation to PACE

Notes taken by: Marty Kennedy

Attendees

Merilyn Senter, ATF Member
Chris Waszczuk, NHDOT
Marty Kennedy, VHB

Others: See attached list of attendees

Presentation

Chris Waszczuk welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the planned upgrade of NH 125 and specifically to discuss the access management component of the project.

Chris described the six-mile project limits, which extend from East Road in Plaistow to NH 111 in Kingston. He proceeded to discuss the corridor and project history and the project need. In describing the project goals, Chris expressed a need to address deficient sections of the roadway, to improve capacity, enhance safety, relieve congestion, and to enhance the safe and efficient access to abutting properties.

Chris concluded this portion of the presentation with a review of the benefits of access management, which included:

- Safety
 - Fewer and less severe crashes
 - Less auto-pedestrian conflicts

- Efficiency
 - Less stop and go traffic
 - Reduced delays
 - Increased and preserved capacity
 - Reduced fuel consumption
 - Preserved investment of road system

- Aesthetics
 - More attractive corridors
 - Improved community appearance

- Livable Communities
 - Enhances community character
 - Preserves neighborhood integrity
 - Preserves or increases property values
 - Lowers vehicular emissions

Chris then introduced Marty Kennedy to discuss the specific access management considerations for the NH 125.

Marty began by presenting a general definition for access management, which stated “*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.*”

Marty stressed the importance of balancing mobility with access. He described various available tools such as providing signalized intersections with left-turn lanes at key locations, providing connector roadways, installing raised medians, locating driveways away from intersections, consolidating driveways, reducing the width and increasing the throat length at driveways, improving driveway alignment, and providing uniform signing.

Marty presented a couple of examples of good access management that have recently been introduced in the corridor. These projects included the left-turn lane at Old Coach Road along with the driveway consolidation at the Pond View Restaurant, and the development of the Petro King gasoline station.

Marty described the overall improvement plan for the corridor stressing that the key element of the access management plan is to provide signalized intersections along the corridor that will handle most of the left-turn movements combined with connector roadways or internal connections between abutting properties that would allow left-turn movements to access the signals.

Before opening the meeting up to comments and questions, Chris Waszczuk briefly reviewed the project development process and discussed tentative dates for future meetings.

Comments and Questions

Comment - Kathy LeClaire, representing BankNorth, stated that she agreed that the proposed median would help resolve some of the corridor’s safety issues. She stated that it is very hazardous for the bank patrons to exit the property especially for vehicles desiring to turn left onto Route 125. She stated that BankNorth is situated south of the bridge (south of the study area) and there are currently many accidents along that section. She questioned why isn’t the raised median being installed on the southern end of the corridor?

Response - Chris Waszczuk concurred with the opinion that medians would enhance safety, but reiterated that as defined the southern limits of this project begin at East Road and extend north. He stated that there is another project currently being developed to coordinate the traffic signals and possibly widen NH 125 in vicinity of the Kohl’s Plaza, which will provide modest improvements in the area. However, the scope of that project does not involve the installation of medians.

Comment - Warren Gerety asked what happens if a business doesn't want to be connected to the connector road. He also questioned whether the ROW required for the connector roadways would be purchased as part of the project.

Response - Marty Kennedy stressed that our objective is to enhance the safe and efficient access to businesses along the corridor. We would expect that most if not all businesses would want to be connected. Chris Waszczuk added that should the connecting roadway be determined to provide a safety or operational benefit to the highway, then it would be laid out and the ROW acquired as part of the project.

Comment - Charles Coco, representing Caldwell Banker, stated that some states use parallel roadways to provide access management. Have you considered that option?

Response - Marty Kennedy explained that what was being described is what is called a collector-distributor (CD) roadway. CD roads can be a very effective means of access management. We did consider them. However, given the number of existing businesses that are located close to the roadway, which would be impacted by a CD road, the CD option was rejected in favor of the connector roads.

Comment - State Representative Major asked if there were any available grants or funding sources to assist in the cost of connector roadways and the elimination of driveways.

Response - Chris Waszczuk stated that where it can be demonstrated that the connection addresses the corridor's safety and operational problems, such as in the elimination of driveways along NH 125, those connector roads would likely be included in the state project and therefore funded as part of the project. Connections through currently undeveloped properties are envisioned to be constructed by the developer as part of their site development. Chris indicated that to his knowledge no separate source of funding was available.

Comment - John Cassavelli asked who is responsible for the funding of the widening along NH 125? Will town dollars be needed?

Response - Chris Waszczuk stated that the improvements to NH 125 would be funded with state and federal dollars. No town contribution is anticipated at this time.

Comment - A concerned citizen questioned, since the Main Street intersection was recently upgraded, why didn't the Department do this widening at that time so the roadway wouldn't have to be reconstructed and adjoining properties impacted twice?

Response - Chris Waszczuk stated that the recent project at Main Street was an interim project that was designed to meet an immediate need to provide protected left-turn lanes. This larger project is more involved and the Department felt that it was important to address the immediate need at the intersection and not wait for the long-term fix.

Comment – Arthur Kazangian, business owner, expressed concern that the raised median will encourage patrons to simply pass by businesses and the corridor will resemble Route 1 in Massachusetts.

Response – Chris Waszczuk stated that the corridor will be more similar to Willow Street in Manchester, although NH 125 could be made to be more attractive, where businesses appear to have flourished.

Comment – Alan Sayers, business owner, expressed concern relative to impacts to private property and parking along the corridor, which will result from the widening to the five lane and median.

Response – Chris Waszczuk stated that there will be some impacts to private property as a result of the proposed widening and those impacts will be minimized to the degree possible. Relative to parking, the Department will strive to minimize and mitigate any impacts to parking.

Comment- Mike McConnell, business owner, questioned whether sidewalks would be constructed as part of the project particularly in the area from East Road to Cumberland Farms.

Response – Chris Waszczuk stated that from East Road to NH 121A intersection, the Department will be considering the installation of sidewalks as part of the project. Additionally, a panel for future sidewalks will be constructed as part of the five lane typical section.

NOTED BY: C. Waszczuk

cc: J. Brillhart
C. Waszczuk
M. Dugas
M. Kennedy (VHB)
G. Greenwood (RPC)
Kingston Selectboard
Plaistow Selectboard
Alison Gulubicki, Chamber of Commerce
Ron Mills, PACE