

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF HIGHWAY DESIGN**

MEETING REPORT

PROJECT: PLAISTOW-KINGSTON
MGS-STP-T-X-5375(010)
10044B
NH 125; Reconstruction from East Road to Main Street

DATE OF MEETING: October 2, 2002

LOCATION OF MEETING: Kingston Town Hall

ATTENDED BY:	<u>Department of Transportation</u>	<u>VHB</u>
	Chris Waszczuk	Marty Kennedy
	<u>Town of Kingston</u>	<u>Town of Plaistow</u>
	Police Chief Don Briggs	Police Chief Stephen Savage
	Fire Chief Norman Hurley	
	Richard St. Hilaire, Director of Public Works	
	Mark Heitz, Selectmen	
	Kevin Burke, Selectmen	
	Ellen Faulconer, Safety Committee	

SUBJECT: Meeting To Discuss Emergency Access Issues

NOTES ON MEETING:

Chief Briggs requested that a meeting be held to discuss and potentially resolve emergency access issues created by the proposed raised median along NH 125. Police and Fire Officials from both Plaistow and Kingston were in attendance with the exception of Fire Chief John McArdle, who could not be available due to an emergency. The current conceptual 2000 scale Access Management Plan for the Corridor, along with the conceptual Reverse Direction Opportunities Plan, were displayed and discussed.

The following summarizes the issues and discussion:

The majority of Town Officials expressed concern that the median would increase fire and ambulance response time. Reverse direction turning opportunities ½ mile to a mile apart were expressed as being inadequate. Kingston Fire Chief Hurley suggested median openings for emergency access be provided at approximate ¼ mile intervals. He stated that he would provide turning radius templates for the Town fire trucks to the Department and VHB. He added that mutual aid involving both Kingston and Plaistow may be necessary for the corridor. It was explained that the entire proposed roadway width, along with the possibility of widened shoulders, would be required to provide the ability for fire trucks to reverse direction via a median opening. The openings would need to be maintained in the winter and would need to be aligned to discourage use by the general public.

Chief Briggs, Ms. Faulkner, and Mr. Heitz expressed concern with the proposed unsignalized truck turnaround locations, citing safety issues. They emphasized that reverse direction movements should only be allowed at signalized locations. Specifically, the group questioned whether trucks would be able to safely use the proposed “jug handle” at West Shore Park Drive intended to accommodate northbound trucks desiring to head south. The group expressed a preference for providing a left turn pocket with a “jug handle” on the opposite side of NH 125 to allow truck to cross only one lane of traffic from a protected lane, enter the “jug handle”, and take a right onto NH 125. It was agreed that this was a safer movement and would be investigated.

Mr. Heitz questioned whether the median was warranted with the current volume of traffic. Ms. Faulkner questioned what the future plan for the northern section (north of Hunt Road) of NH 125 was. It was explained that the median was proposed for safety reasons. Studies have shown that corridors with high volumes of traffic, multiple lanes, and uncontrolled access are locations of high accidents and congestion due to the conflicts inherent between the through traffic and the turning vehicles. The current ADT of 23,000 north of East Road and the projected volume of 22,000 (in the year 2024) south of Hunt Road, warrant two lanes in each direction. It was also explained that the Department will be evaluating the merits of extending the median and five lane sections north of Hunt Road to the project limit.

Ms. Faulkner cautioned that during the feasibility study the Town of Kingston along with the general public expressed strong reservations regarding the appropriateness of a 5 lane section north of Hunt Road. She questioned the need for a 5 lane proposal if traffic volumes and good access management don't warrant such an expansion.

Chief Savage expressed concern with maintaining a median opening to allow uncontrolled movements at the Kingston Road intersection. He expressed support for the incorporation of the frontage roads conveying truck traffic from Kingston Road to a signalized intersection opposite Roadstone Drive. Chief Savage suggested the median opening at Kingston Road be designed and properly signed to allow access in and right turns out, but to prohibit exiting left turns.

Several Town Officials and Selectmen expressed concern with publicly presenting the current plan. They suggested the access management plan be further refined and expressed concerns resolved prior to presenting the Kingston concept at a Selectmen's meeting. It was decided by all in attendance to postpone the scheduled Monday evening meeting with the Selectmen (October 7th, 2002) until after the Informational Access Management Meetings were held.

Submitted:

Christopher M. Waszczuk, P.E.
Project Manager

cc: J. Brillhart
M. Dugas
M. Kennedy (VHB)
Town of Kingston Selectboard
Town of Plaistow Selectboard

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