



NH 111 Corridor & Wall Street Extension Feasibility Study

Project Advisory Meeting #4 February 18th, 2010 Windham Planning & Development Office

Minutes

Members Present: Bruce Breton, Tom McPherson, Sy Wrenn, Bob Ashburn, Lori Kimball (for Kay Normington), Bob Winmill, Matt Caron (SNHPC) and William Rose (NHDOT).

Project Staff

Present: Gene McCarthy and Mike McDonald (McFarland-Johnson); Cliff Sinnott (RPC); and Laura Scott, (Windham).

1. Open/Welcome/Introductions

Sinnott welcomed everyone and attendees introduced themselves.

2. Public Comment; Other Communication

Sinnott asked if there was public comment and noted there would be another opportunity for public comment at the end of the meeting.

3. PAC meeting #4 Summary

Sinnott circulated a new draft of the minutes for the January meeting which represents the combined notes of Mike McDonald and Sinnott's. They replace the draft sent with the meeting packet. Bob Ashburn noted that he attended the meeting and should be recorded in the minutes as present. The minutes were accepted as corrected.

4. Review/discussion of Draft Problem & Vision Statements

McCarthy explained that since the last meeting he has rewritten both the problem and vision statements to incorporate the comments made then. His starting point was a version of each statement provided by Diane Fallon following the meeting which seemed to capture the key points made. He suggested the Committee make one more pass at the statements as they are and make some final adjustments.

Problem statement comments:

Bruce Breton expressed concern about the emphasis in the problem statement of vehicle dependency. For the foreseeable future there will be a significant dependency on vehicles in Windham just as there is for most communities in New Hampshire. It was suggested that the wording be that there is a trend toward dependency, the problems that result.

Bob Ashburn said that the problem statement should better reflect some of the resource constraints that may limit options. These include topography and wetlands. Some are likely to limit options that the Town may have to address the stated problems. Ashburn also commented that the future impact of the I-93 sounds too tentative. The statement should acknowledge that the increase in traffic on I-93 will increase the already high traffic volumes through the town center.

Sy Wrenn said the lack of public utilities should also be acknowledged as an important aspect of the problem in addition to lack of connectivity between commercial businesses. Breton pointed out that the recent commercial development on NH111 east of town center is connected through their parking lots.

Vision statement comments:

Laura Scott suggested that it is probably not realistic to suggest in the vision that all travel modes should be available. She suggested that it be said that the town center should be served by a variety of modes.

Sy Wrenn said that it seems odd that the vision makes no mention of the potential role of a Wall Street extension to address high traffic volumes in the town center. The suggestion was that reducing traffic volumes be made a more explicit part of the vision.

Gene McCarthy said he will compile these comments and send a new revised version to the Committee before the next meeting.

5. Traffic Model Results

McCarthy reviewed traffic model volume results in the handout from the last meeting, showing projected traffic volumes, counts and modeling results for 2035, including different versions for different scenarios. The volume and flow changes indicated in the build and no-build future year (2035) were more or less as expected. He cautioned that some results that may seem odd at first review can make sense when considering regional changes in travel patterns that may be induced by changes in travel times or routes. He noted that with the Wall St extension, volumes on 111 east of the town center increase significantly due to improved access to I-93 from residential areas to the northwest.

Ashburn asked if some of the unexplained volumes around the No. Lowell/111 intersection were due to volumes on Church St which are not shown. McCarthy said that is likely the case and they will be added.

William Rose suggested that existing volumes should be shown for comparison; McCarthy said that will be provided.

Wrenn asked what level of service would result in 2035 under the no build scenario on 111. McCarthy said it could not be accommodated on a 2 lane roadway without causing highly congested conditions and very low levels of service.

Brian Grady from RSG explained some of the model assumptions and variables and responded to questions. Discussion continued about traffic patterns in the area.

6. Future Land Use & Development Assumptions (for Modeling)

Sinnott summarized discussion which began at the previous meeting -- that an important factor in model accuracy is the reasonableness of land use/development forecasts which predict the location and extent of future growth. Scott asked whether the land use projections in the model are consistent with the buildout that has just been conducted under the CTAP program. Sinnott said checking that consistency is a good idea and he will do that. He believes that the buildout has no particular time horizon. Rather the buildout assumes a maximum amount of future development at an undetermined time in the future and evaluates where that development would occur under different planning scenarios.

More discussion ensued about how the area will change in the future and what future development is known or planned. Scott said she will compile information about proposed and potential projects. Sinnott asked if the project scope anticipated modeling different growth scenarios. McCarthy said that it does not per se, but sensitivity analyses can be done to identify if specific future development would significantly alter regional patterns. Grady said he will be able to do that kind of analysis – to see if what is planned would “move the needle” on the projected traffic volumes.

7. Recurring Business

- a. Project tasks/schedule: no changes reported
- b. Contract Extension request: Sinnott said the contract amendment has not made it to Governor and Council yet but he does not foresee a problem.
- c. Tracking/submission of Committee members – hours to date. Scott asked all committee members to keep close track of hours spent toward the project, including meeting attendance, document review, etc. and provide them to her when requested.

8. Other Business

Bruce Breton suggested that with the extended time between public meeting it would be a good idea to do press release to the local papers to keep the public interested and informed about the project. Scott suggested that a good occasion for a press release will be when the project website is activated.

9. Next Meeting: March 25th, 9AM

10. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Cliff Sinnott
RPC Project Staff