



MEETING MINUTES

Hooksett U.S. 3/NH 28 – Project 29611

WSP 100 Commercial Street, 2nd Floor, South, Manchester, NH 03101 Tel: (603) 644-5200

Date: November 18, 2020
Time: 9:00 AM
Location: Zoom Video Conference
Re: Working Group Meeting #1

Attendees:

NHDOT

Don Lyford, Project Manager
Tobey Reynolds, Roadway Section Chief
Stephanie Micucci, Roadway Section Group Leader
Jason Ayotte, Roadway Senior Design Engineer
Rebecca Martin, Environmental Coordinator

WSP

Liviu Sfintescu, Project Manager
Tim Higginson, Deputy Project Manager
Delia Makhetha, Public Involvement

Working Group Participants

Richard Radwanski, District 5
Andre Garron, Town of Hooksett Administrator
Bruce Thomas, Town of Hooksett Engineer
William Rearick, Hooksett Schools Superintendent
Jake Robie, Hooksett Police Department Captain
Nate Miller, Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission
Lawrence Yassanye, SNHU Capital Projects
David Boutin, Hooksett Town Councilor

Meeting Discussion:

Introductions were made from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), the WSP consulting firm, and all town representatives (listed above), and the agenda was reviewed before the discussion shifted to reviewing the PowerPoint prepared by WSP.

1. Project Background

Discussion: This is the first of the six Working Group (WG) meetings for the Hooksett U.S. 3 to discuss the project and the design process.

- Project limits are from Alice Avenue to Martins Ferry Road (NH Route 27)
- Project scope includes:
 - Improve safety and mobility for all users
 - Achieve appropriate balance between the needs of motorized, non-motorized and transit users
 - Provide safe and efficient access to abutting properties
 - Work closely with public and private stakeholders on project decision making.
- Construction budget is currently \$9.5 million
- The projects is in preliminary design phase (May 2020 – September 2022), final design currently slated for 2022-2024 and planning construction start date is 2025
- Question (Q): The funding currently in the NHDOT 10-year plan is \$9.5 million. Does NHDOT believe this funding will be adequate or will need supplementing?
 - Answer (A): Not possible to say without knowing the final concept.
- Q: Will the PowerPoint slides be available after the presentation?
 - A: Yes, slides will be shared with participants and available on the project website.

2. Public Involvement Plan

Discussion: The Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is the working document that outlines public participation and communication during the design process. The PIP sets up the WG parameters. This is a working document that will be updated as the project evolves. WG members received the PIP in advance for review and the public can review the working document on the project website.

- WG roles and responsibilities were reviewed
- 11 step Project Development Process was reviewed – the current WG is tasked with assisting with steps 1-6, if there is interest and need, the WG can continue through construction.
- Public Involvement Timeline includes two public informational meetings, a public hearing and six WG meetings.
- Different communication methods and platforms were discussed – social media, websites, email notifications and local media.

3. Overview of Corridor Issues

Discussion: NHDOT and WSP have done a preliminary review of potential corridor issues to discuss today. The WG can help identify additional issues throughout the corridor.

- WSP reviewed the corridor and identified preliminary issues including:
 - Poor access management – primarily in southern portion of corridor
 - Inadequate bike lane width – existing width is 2-3 ft, not the recommended 4-5 ft width

- Lack of sidewalk and continuity – residences don't have sidewalk access along the corridor
- Outdated traffic signal systems – ADA improvements are missing at the three existing signals in the corridor at Alice Avenue, Mammoth Road and Martins Ferry Road
- Traffic signal backups – identified mainly at the Mammoth Road intersection
- Inadequate sight distance – at Embassy Avenue, not easy to see oncoming traffic from Route 3
- Inefficient use of the southbound lanes on Rte 3 at Alice Avenue
- Comment (C): (Town Administrator) When approaching Alice Avenue to the south, there is always a long line of traffic in the right lane and the left thru lane is empty. This appears to be a sight distance problem or how the lane is set up. People are hung up behind the traffic in the right lane and are not able to get into the left lane without crossing into the center turn lane.
 - A: (WSP) Yes, we are aware of this issue and this is something that will be considered for this project.
- C: (Town Administrator) There was a fatality on Route 3, which should be taken into consideration. This was a pedestrian fatality possibly related to a shoulder width issue.
 - A: (WSP) Yes, we collected crash data and noted there are more accidents in the southern part of the corridor. We are going to look at this data more as the design advances.
- Q: (Town Councilor) Will the project design consider multiple lanes in each direction, as the roadway is before/after, so there is a continuation of the roadway to improve continuity?
 - A: (WSP) Traffic counts were conducted in September and they are being processed and analyzed before determining the most efficient option – which could include adding lanes at various locations.
- C: (Town Councilor) When analyzing traffic data, we should consider the potential traffic increases over the next couple years.
 - A: (WSP) We are analyzing through 2045 (the project design year).
- Q: (SNHRPC) Does the September 2020 traffic data account for traffic decrease due to COVID?
 - A: (WSP) Traffic counts are increased with a “COVID adjustment factor” based on historical data and the typical 1% growth factor. We realize that all SNHU classes are online, so traffic flows are very low, which is why we are using historical data to project traffic to 2045.
- C: (Town Councilor) During the summer months, Route 3 is used to access the lakes region, which increases the traffic, which the traffic counts should consider.
 - A: (WSP) We are looking at peak hours throughout the corridor, like Friday afternoons going north and Sundays going south. We can look at signage issues south of the corridor too.
- C: (Town Councilor) At the Mammoth Road intersection, often time the people going north don't stop when turning right. Perhaps a solution is a T-intersection to make people stop at the light.

- A: (WSP) Yes, we will be looking at a variety of alternatives to improve that intersection.
- Q: (Town Councilor) Are bicycle lanes are required for this project and if so, is it required on both sides of the road?
 - R: Yes, they would be 4-5 ft on both sides of the road.

4. Develop Project Vision Statement and Purpose and Need Statement

Discussion: NHDOT and WSP developed a draft Vision Statement and draft Purpose and Need Statement for the project.

- Draft vision statement *“Improve safety and mobility of all users by applying ‘Complete Streets’ principles”*. Complete Streets is a transportation policy and design approach that requires the streets to be planned, designed, built and maintained for all users regardless of their mode of transportation.
- C: (Superintendent) The term Complete Streets will not be easily understood by the public, it needs to be defined clearly
- C: (Town of Hooksett) Efficiency should be added along with safety and mobility
 - R: (WSP) Revised drafts will be updated and circulated to the WG for their input and review following the meeting.
- C: (SNHRPC): Commission needs to maintain Congestion Management Process and it is worth noting that this project is a strategy for managing congestion in the region.
- WG members agreed adding ~~the~~ “efficiency” to the vision statement.
- WG members agreed defining “complete streets” term in the vision statement.

- Draft Purpose and Need Statement *“The purpose of the project is to improve 1.4 miles of the US Route 3/NH 28 corridor between Alice Ave/West Alice Ave and NH Route 27/ Martins Ferry Road. These improvements are needed to address the following issues:*
 - *Congestion and Safety; significant intersection back-ups during peak hours. Inadequate use of center turning lanes.*
 - *Access Management; poorly defined driveways allowing uncontrolled access to US Route 3/NH 28.*
 - *Multimodal Facilities; sidewalk discontinuity limiting pedestrian access and mobility. Vehicle-pedestrian conflicts exist where pedestrian crossings are not defined. Insufficient shoulder width to safely accommodate bicyclists on US Route 3/NH 28/*
 - *Traffic Signal System; systems are outdated requiring ADA, equipment upgrades and timing improvements to promote efficient traffic flow.*
 - *Street Lighting; Inadequate street lighting along sidewalks and intersections hinder visibility and safety.*
 - *Drainage; the existing drainage systems create maintenance and water quality concerns.”*
- Q: (Town Councilor) What is meant by multimodal facilities? Can we define and/or expand

- the term for the public?
- A: (WSP) Multimodal refers to all modes of transportation; pedestrian, buses, bicycles and cars.
 - C: (Town Councilor) Recommend noting preparations for the immediate and long-term transportation improvements along Route 3 and NH 28.
 - A: (WSP) Will incorporate into revised Purpose and Need Statement.
 - C: (SNHRPC): Should be better to outline “Traffic Improvements” and “Traffic Flow” not just “Traffic Signals.”
 - A: (WSP) Yes, it is not limited to just timing, we will revise this for the next draft Purpose and Need Statement.
 - C: (NHDOT) Yes, this should be more general for intersection improvements, not simply traffic signals.
 - C: (Town Administrator) Street lights are currently being converted to LED lighting, will better lighting be evaluated in the corridor to suggest or add more light? If so, it would be best to use the LED technology. Also, for access management, what is the intended purpose? Will NHDOT define a policy for this or will improvements be implemented as part of the project?
 - A: (WSP/NHDOT) In terms of lighting, this will be evaluated during the final design process. NHDOT usually follows the towns lighting standard.
 - A: (WSP) For access management, the project will look at a variety of methods to address the access management issues.
 - C: (Town of Hooksett) Sight distance should be clarified in the Purpose and Need Statement
 - A: (WSP) This will be added.
 - Q: (SNHRPC) Is there is anything in this project that needs to be included from an ITS (intelligent transportation infrastructure) perspective since this is National Highway System?
 - A: (NHDOT) NHDOT has a policy to review ITS on all projects. ITS discussions usually come in during the 50-60% stage of the project.
 - Q: (Town Councilor) Will traffic lights be coordinated with a pre-emption system for emergency vehicles?
 - A: (WSP) This is part of traffic signal improvements which will be reviewed and evaluated. Most of this will come during the final design stage.
 - Q: (Town Councilor) Does the federal government have any role in this project?
 - A: (NHDOT) This is a federally funded project delegated to the NHDOT. The federal government will do check-ins with NHDOT and does have some say in the project.
 - Q: (Town Administrator) Have discussions happened with Manchester regarding their portion of Route 3 and if so, are the concerns similar?
 - A: (NHDOT) Only available information would be in the 10-year plan process. In the recent process, there was an online survey. The results for this survey would be available in the NHDOT 10-year plan.
 - A follow-up survey will be sent to the WG to review the revised drafts of the Vision Statement and Purpose and Need Statement. At the next meeting the WG will finalize the Vision Statement and Purpose and Need Statement.
 - WG set the next meeting for the morning of the third Wednesday in January 2021 at 9 AM.

ACTION ITEMS

1. WSP will send a survey after the meeting to guide the final draft of the Vision Statement and Purpose and Need Statement