



## Meeting Notes

Attendees: Mayor Ted Gatsas, City of Manchester  
Senator David Boutin, State Senate  
David Beauchesne – City of Manchester  
Jay Minkarah – City of Manchester  
David Winslow – City of Manchester  
Will Stewart – Manchester Chamber of Commerce  
Susan Huard – Manchester Community College  
Leo Lessard – Town of Hooksett  
Barbara Cocci – Hooksett Chamber of Commerce  
Carl Quiram – Town of Goffstown  
Julie Chen – SNHPC  
Tim White – SNHPC  
Moe Morin – Member of the Public  
Jamie Sikora - FHWA  
Keith Cota – NHDOT  
Mike Dugas – NHDOT  
Nancy Spaulding – NHDOT  
Marc Laurin - NHDOT  
Marty Kennedy – VHB  
Dale Abbott - VHB

Date/Time: August 13, 2012  
1:00 – 2:15 PM

Project No.: 52196.00

Place: Manchester Chamber of Commerce

Re: I-293 Exits 6 and 7  
Manchester #16099  
Advisory Committee Meeting #2

Notes taken by: Dale Abbott

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Mr. Marty Kennedy of VHB opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and stated that unlike the first TAC meeting, which was more of a formal presentation to the Committee; this meeting would be a bit less formal using more of an interactive discussion format.

Mr. Kennedy reviewed the meeting agenda, which included the following:

1. Committee feedback on the 1<sup>st</sup> Public Meeting
2. A review of comments/ideas submitted through the website
3. Future year traffic volume projections
4. Discussion on the format for the September workshops

Mr. Kennedy reminded the Committee that we are getting to the end of our data collection/problem identification phase and will soon be entering our brainstorming/alternatives identification phase. It is important that we come to consensus on defining the problems so that we can move onto considering potential solutions.

Mr. Kennedy asked Committee members for their thoughts on the July public informational meeting.

Mr. Tim White asked if the turnout was what was expected.

Mr. Kennedy replied that he thought it was a good showing, with many in attendance being local officials. Mr. Kennedy suggested that going forward; he would expect to see more individuals from the general public.

Mr. Jamie Sikora suggested that holding a one hour open house prior to the start of the next meeting might be beneficial.

Mr. David Beauchesne stated that he was happy to see the meeting being broadcast through the City's local access channel.

Mr. Kennedy noted that VHB had obtained a copy of the video from the cable channel and will be posting it to the project website.

Mr. Kennedy asked the Committee if there were any geometric or operational deficiencies within the study area that have yet to be raised.

Mr. White responded that he felt that there are two categories of problems; 1) capacity/operational deficiencies within the existing corridor and, 2) how access within the study area might change.

Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. Jay Minkarah if there were any other issues from the City of Manchester's perspective.

Mr. Minkarah stated that he would defer to Mayor Gatsas, but that he felt that the scope was well-defined early on in the project.

Mayor Gatsas stated that it was important to provide access to Dunbarton Road as the new Exit 7 interchange is being developed, to encourage economic development in that area of the City.

Mr. Kennedy noted that it was his understanding that the current expectations for the build-out of the Hackett Hill area are more modest, from a traffic-generating perspective, than the original Hackett Hill Master Plan indicated. Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. Minkarah if that was in fact the case.

Mr. Minkarah stated that although the expected square footage is similar, the current expectation is that there will be less high traffic generating office space and a greater percentage of lower traffic generating warehousing type uses. Mr. Minkarah noted that what is currently planned would be similar to the development pattern at East Industrial Park Drive.

Mr. Kennedy suggested that although the number of vehicle-trips may be less, warehousing type uses may generate more trucking type activity.

Mr. Minkarah agreed. Mr. Minkarah also noted that some of the peak traffic flow from the area may occur during hours other than the peak commuter hours.

Mr. Kennedy asked the Committee for their thoughts on any particular constraints such as any potential impacts to existing businesses, the mill yard/historical land use, etc.

Mr. Will Stewart stated that the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce has not received any specific input or concerns from businesses in the area. However, he did state that in general the Chamber would be concerned with any potential impacts to business.

Mr. Minkarah stated that from an economic perspective, there are a number of important buildings in the area that contribute to the City's tax base and that the study should look to minimize any potential impacts to businesses.

Mr. Moe Morin, a member of the public, stated that as a member of the condo association for the condominiums that are located adjacent to the Exit 6 northbound on-ramp, he and other residents are concerned with the potential encroachment of the highway on their property. Mr. Morin mentioned that noise impacts remain a major concern for the residential properties.

Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. Morin about existing noise levels from the highway.

Mr. Morin stated that during the summer, the trees do provide a buffer from the highway. However, in the winter when the foliage is gone the noise is more noticeable. Mr. Morin stated that you generally can't hear the highway from inside the homes due to the way the building was constructed with the main access hall running along the highway side of the building and separating the residential units from the highway. However, the problem is that once you walk outside the building you are reminded of the proximity of the highway.

Mr. Kennedy encouraged Mr. Morin to spread the word to other residents of the condominiums to attend the next public information meeting.

Senator Boutin asked if it is worth considering a more permanent protection/privacy from the highway in the form of sound walls. Senator Boutin stated that he felt sound walls at the Exit 6 northbound on-ramp like the ones constructed at Exit 5 would put residents at ease.

Senator Boutin stated that he agreed with the Mayor about opening up opportunities for economic development in the Hackett Hill area, but cautioned that there are some environmentally sensitive resources in the area and he would not want the entire project to get delayed due to difficulties in getting some elements of the project permitted.

Mr. Kennedy reiterated that the project's analysis will need to demonstrate a clear benefit to the highway in order to justify any impacts created by extending a new Exit 7 connector road across Black Brook.

Mr. Kennedy added that some elements of the solution may be more challenging than others and for that reason we may need to consider the project being constructed in phases.

Mr. Keith Cota added that we don't want to be biased with regard to any potential alternative. We know there are going to be environmental and social impacts, especially on a project like this, but the purpose of the study is to work through those issues.

Mr. Cota stated that once we identify all the impacts, other agencies will be involved in reviewing those impacts. Depending on the level of impact, the permitting process could become lengthy.

Mr. Kennedy reviewed with the Committee comments that were received through the project website since the first Public Informational Meeting. Mr. Kennedy read each of the four comments received to the Committee and encouraged members of the Committee to bring forward any additional comments that they receive from the public. The comments and ideas focused in the areas of Front Street, the Amoskeag Circle, and the curve on I-293 north at the Exit 6 off-ramp.

Senator Boutin asked if the Exit 6 northbound off ramp was one lane or two.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the ramp currently provides one lane.

Senator Boutin asked if it is possible to open the ramp up and create two lanes of traffic. Senator Boutin noted that the river is a constraint, but creating two lanes may be an option. The idea being that with an additional lane and proper signage, drivers might be able to stack in the appropriate lane for entering the traffic circle and thereby reduce the queue onto the breakdown lane of the highway.

Mr. Kennedy responded that short-term solutions such as modifications to pavement markings and additional signage will be considered.

Mr. Morin noted that at the Amoskeag Traffic Circle, you still have the problem of drivers in the circle trying to exit to Manchester, which prevents drivers at the Exit 6 off-ramp from entering the circle to travel to the west.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the Amoskeag Traffic Circle currently exceeds its capacity to process traffic during the peak hours of the day and as a result motorists know that they need to be aggressive to get through the area. Mr. Kennedy also noted that he expects that the long-term solution to the Amoskeag Traffic Circle will be something that looks much different than it does today.

Senator Boutin mentioned that the Amoskeag Traffic Circle reminds him of the former Weeks Traffic Circle in Dover. Senator Boutin stated that he felt that the signal improvement at the former Weeks Traffic Circle made it a much better solution.

Mr. Sikora mentioned that as the project progresses he expects that additional comments regarding noise barriers and visibility issues would likely be raised by the public.

Mr. Mike Dugas responded to one of the public comments regarding truck traffic on Front Street by stating that a lot of the truck traffic in the southbound direction is likely due to truckers avoiding the Hooksett Tollbooth and re-entering the highway network at Front Street.

Mr. Morin noted that he is surprised that there are not more serious accidents within the corridor.

Mr. Kennedy reminded the Committee that the project team is not just considering capacity related solutions but an important element of the solutions will be the need to address safety deficiencies.

Senator Boutin asked who owned the Amoskeag Traffic Circle.

Mr. Cota stated that the Department through the Bureau of Turnpikes controls the ROW associated with the traffic circle.

A discussion followed regarding the future traffic volume projections within the study area. Mr. Kennedy stated that the growth projections within the study area reflected local/regional growth trends, which showed about a 1% annual growth rate. The projected 2035 mainline and intersection weekday AM and PM peak hour traffic volume networks were provided to the Committee on handouts. Mr. Kennedy also provided the Committee a graphic that summarized the operational analysis that was conducted for the 2035 future year condition.

Senator Boutin asked if the future year traffic volumes were hourly or daily.

Mr. Kennedy replied that they were AM and PM peak hour traffic volumes.

Mr. White asked if the future year volumes reflect the growth only and maintain the existing layout of the study area roadways.

Mr. Kennedy said yes that the turning movements represented a 2035 No Build as in no geometric changes to the study area intersections.

Senator Boutin commented that the AM and PM traffic volumes at Exit 6 were similar. He asked if the Project Team is able to tell where motorists are coming from and destined to.

Mr. Kennedy replied that the level of travel demand is similar during the morning and evening peak periods because traffic volumes close to large cities such as Manchester, are influenced both by residents commuting to and from work outside the area as well as businesses drawing traffic demand into the area. Additionally, we have conducted actual turning movement counts throughout the study corridor and through the SNHPC's Regional Traffic Model we are able to obtain the origins and destinations between traffic zones.

Senator Boutin stated that the traffic volumes at the Exit 6 ramps are similar during the AM and PM yet he does not notice as much congestion in the morning at the Exit 6 northbound off-ramp.

Mr. Kennedy replied that although the ramp volume is similar, it is the congestion within the Amoskeag Traffic Circle that contributes to the queuing on the ramp in the PM.

Senator Boutin asked if perhaps motorists destined to the Mill Yard in the morning use Exit 5 rather than Exit 6.

Mr. Minkarah thought that motorists destined to the Mill Yard use either exit depending on the level of congestion at each interchange.

Mr. Beauchesne suggested that motorists are fairly savvy and tend to make adjustments in their driving patterns to avoid congested areas.

Mr. Minkarah thought that providing motorists real-time messages on signing could help in reducing congestion.

Mr. Sikora noted that Advanced Traffic Management Systems (ATMS) are being implemented as part of the current I-93 project. He also reminded the Committee that Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation Systems Management (TSM) are alternatives that will be considered under this study.

At this point, Mr. Kennedy initiated a discussion on the upcoming September workshops. Mr. Kennedy stated that we are proposing to hold two (2) workshops during the month of September. The first workshop, which would be for the general public, is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday September 18<sup>th</sup>. This public workshop would be followed by a similar workshop-type meeting for TAC members only on Wednesday September 26<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Kennedy noted that we plan to hold the meetings at the Manchester Community College. However, the dates and times have yet to be confirmed.

Mr. Kennedy asked the Committee members for their thoughts on the format to be used at the September public workshop. Mr. Kennedy envisioned an open informal format with an opening 15-20 minute presentation that would provide instructions on the workshop. However, most of the meeting would consist of the workshop where attendees would have an opportunity to share their thoughts on study corridor deficiencies, corridor constraints, and potential solutions. Mr. Kennedy thought the workshop could be organized in 1 of 2 ways. The first would consist of breakout groups where individuals are assigned to a particular group. A second more informal type of format would allow attendees to move from table to table to view plans and share their thoughts with study team members who would be stationed at various tables.

Barbara Cocci stated that she thought the breakout groups would make it easier for the public to understand the information.

Mr. Kennedy suggested that if we do breakout groups, we might consider organizing the groups by topic (highway layout, environmental issues, etc.) that would be staffed by leaders from the project team.

Mr. White stated the he expects some attendees will be concerned with capacity/operational issues within the corridor while others will be more concerned with proposed access changes.

Mr. Minkarah stated that he would prefer the less formal format for the workshop. He thought that the breakout group format might cause people to leave the meeting because they didn't want to be forced into a group. He felt that people would prefer to walk around and review the information and provide comments at their own pace.

Mr. Morin suggested that whatever we do, please keep it simple.

Mr. Kennedy noted that regardless of the format, clear instructions would be presented to all attendees at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Kennedy also suggested that based on his experience, people generally like the flexibility of being able to walk around and to see and hear what's happening at different tables.

Mr. Sikora agreed with Mr. Kennedy that people are a lot more comfortable walking around a meeting on their own and that an open format might work better.

Mr. Minkarah noted that the public always has the option to provide comments through the project website. Not all comments need to occur at the meeting.

Mr. Kennedy asked the Committee if any of them would be interested in volunteering to serve as group leaders or note takers at the public workshop.

Senator Boutin, Mr. White, and Ms. Susan Huard offered their services.

Senator Boutin suggested that we get the meeting dates broadcast on to the City's website and local cable access channel as soon as possible.

Senator Boutin asked about the location of the Cedar Swamp at Hackett Hill.

Mr. Minkarah stated that the Cedar Swamp is located on the western side of the property. Mr. Minkarah also reiterated the City's goal of providing direct access to the Industrial Park from Dunbarton Road.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the next TAC meeting would occur the week following the second public informational meeting. Mr. Kennedy encouraged members of the Committee to attend the public workshop and to serve as the Study Team's ears to the community bringing what you hear back to the TAC meetings for discussion. Mr. Kennedy noted that by the end of September we want to have moved on from identifying problems and deficiencies and focus our attention on developing and evaluating solutions.

Mr. Cota noted that the public information meeting should be structured for maximum public input. Mr. Cota asked the TAC to get their feedback on the structure to Mr. Kennedy soon.

Mr. White noted a correction to the meeting minutes from the first public meeting. Bottom of Page 2 of the 07/18/12 meeting minutes – he believes that the reference to the “member of the public” asking a question concerning crash data was Alderman Greazzo from Ward 10.

Mr. Kennedy asked the Committee members for any feedback on the project website and reminded them to feel free to send along any comments on improving the site.

The Committee members replied that they thought the site looked good.

Mr. Beauchesne suggested that the study area communities provide a direct link to the project website on the main page of their websites.

Mr. Kennedy thanked the TAC for attending the meeting. The meeting ended at 2:15 PM.