



Meeting Notes

Attendees: Senator David Boutin – State Senate
Bruce Thomas – City of Manchester
David Beauchesne – City of Manchester
Carl Quiram – Town of Goffstown
Jo Ann Duffy – Town of Hooksett
Tony Marts – Town of Goffstown
Tim White – SNHPC
Adam Hlasny – SNHPC
Jamie Sikora – FHWA
Leigh Levine – FHWA
Keith Cota – NHDOT
David Smith – NHDOT
Mike Dugas – NHDOT
Nancy Spaulding – NHDOT
Marc Laurin – NHDOT
Marty Kennedy – VHB
Dale Abbott – VHB

Date/Time: January 31, 2013
1:00 – 2:30 PM

Project No.: 52196.00

Place: Manchester Community College

Re: I-293 Exits 6 and 7
Manchester #16099
Advisory Committee Meeting #5

Notes taken by: Dale Abbott

Mr. Marty Kennedy of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and reviewing the meeting agenda, which included a review of the feedback received from the December public meeting, a recap of the alternatives, a discussion on traffic volume demand and diversion, a discussion of some conceptual design matters, and a video presentation on Diverging Diamond Interchanges (DDI).

Mr. Kennedy delivered a PowerPoint presentation reminding the TAC of the study purpose and schedule. In reviewing the feedback from the December public meeting, Mr. Kennedy noted that there was a general consensus that the long-term alternatives, which were presented, are appropriate for evaluation. However, he noted that there was concern that advancing mid-term solutions could delay the implementation of the ultimate solution. In fact, he noted that Mayor Gatsas stated that he would prefer that we not pursue mid-term solutions for that very reason.

Mr. Kennedy recapped each of the proposed long-term alternatives using an initial draft of the Evaluation Matrix. He indicated that we would discuss the Evaluation Matrix as well as the evaluation criteria at next month's meeting.

With regard to the future traffic volume demands, Mr. Kennedy spoke in general terms as to the expected major diversions. He expects to have the final traffic assignments for each alternative available to present at the next meeting.

At this point, Mr. Kennedy showed a short (5 min.) demonstration video on how Diverging Diamond Interchanges (DDI) operate.

Lastly, Mr. Kennedy shared some preliminary roadway alignments and profiles for some of the initial concepts at the existing Exit 7 and at the relocated Exit 7. Mr. Kennedy noted that the existing Exit 7 alternative (Alt. 8) would likely be modified to include a direct connection from Front Street to Dunbarton Road, so that this alternative provides similar connectivity as the Exit 7 relocation alternatives and the alternatives can be evaluated on equal terms.

Throughout and following Mr. Kennedy's presentation, the following comments/questions were raised:

Mr. Jamie Sikora asked if any written public comments or comments submitted through the project website were received with regard to the December 12th public meeting.

Mr. Kennedy stated that we continue to receive suggestions/ideas through the website – mostly relating to suggestions for short-term solutions. We have received a couple of these types of comments since the public meeting.

Mr. Tim White clarified that Mayor Ted Gatsas' comment at the December 12th public meeting, was that Mayor Gatsas stated that he did not want the Study to spend any more time evaluating mid-term solutions.

Mr. Kennedy concurred with Mr. White's comment, but indicated that the act of identifying potential mid-term solutions doesn't commit the DOT to pursuing them.

Mr. Keith Cota agreed with Mr. Kennedy and added that the mid-term solutions need to be part of the alternative's evaluation or the resource agencies will question the validity of the analysis.

Mr. Tony Marts asked if the Study Team had considered stacking the mainline travel lanes rather than widening to three lanes.

Mr. Cota replied that due to the cost associated with stacking the travel lanes, the Study Team had not considered them for this project.

Mr. Sikora added that stacking travel lanes would likely result in increased noise levels.

Senator David Boutin asked both Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Cota if the issue of noise would be included in the alternative evaluation matrix.

Both replied that it would.

Mr. Mike Dugas suggested clarification regarding the main line Alternative 2 (widen to the east) and Alternative 3 (widen to the west). He noted that in the end, it is likely that a combination of Alternatives 2 and 3 will be chosen (rather than one or the other), which minimizes impacts to resources on both sides of the highway.

Mr. David Beauchesne asked what the southerly limit for widening on the mainline is.

Mr. Cota replied that the southerly limit for this study is just north of Exit 5, where the infrastructure is already in place to accommodate a 6-lane section.

Senator Boutin asked that if Exit 7 is relocated to the north of its current location and the proposed connector road is successful in pulling traffic away from Exit 6, would that mean that not as much infrastructure improvement and cost would be needed at Exit 6.

Mr. Cota suggested that although it could be less there would still be substantial issues to address at Exit 6.

Mr. White commented that it will be important that the appropriate alternative for Exit 7 be chosen in order to draw traffic away from the Exit 6 area.

Mr. White asked Mr. Kennedy if SNHPC's traffic model needed to be modified substantially for use in the study.

Mr. Kennedy replied that the TAZ network needed to be adjusted and that some additional roads (links) needed to be added to the existing conditions model network.

Mr. Beauchesne asked if the existing ramps at Exit 7 would remain in place if the Exit is relocated to the north.

Mr. Kennedy replied that ramps would be removed.

Mr. Beauchesne commented that if the existing Exit 7 ramps are removed, Front Street southbound traffic would need to enter the highway by way of the new connection at the relocated Exit 7.

Mr. Beauchesne asked if it was possible that the southbound traffic would remain on Route 3A and merge onto the highway at Exit 6.

Mr. Kennedy stated that he would expect southbound traffic on Route 3A would use the relocated Exit 7 as it would be more convenient than continuing south on Front Street to enter the highway at Exit 6.

Mr. Beauchesne commented that if a Diverging Diamond Interchange is constructed at Exit 6, motorists who mistakenly exit the highway would find it difficult to enter directly back onto the highway.

Mr. Leigh Levine asked how the ROW impacts for a Diverging Diamond Interchange compared to the more traditional diamond interchange.

Mr. Kennedy responded that ROW impacts for the Diverging Diamond Interchange alternative are likely to be similar to those of the standard diamond interchange alternative because the general layout and location are similar. However, the ROW needs for Single-Point Interchange (SPUI) alternative differ from diamond interchange alternatives because the SPUI is proposed at a different location.

Mr. Kennedy noted that the alternatives evaluation will identify potential ROW impacts for each alternative and allow such comparisons to be made, once the analysis is complete.

Mr. Carl Quiram asked how the alternatives evaluation is conducted for such a large project.

Mr. Kennedy stated the next TAC meeting will focus on the criteria used to conduct the alternatives evaluation and asked Mr. Quiram to hold his question until next month's meeting.

Mr. David Smith asked if the Study Team will use any traffic visualization software to demonstrate how the alternatives will function.

Mr. Kennedy replied that visualization software will be used to depict the alternatives. Mr. Kennedy also noted that he will present the information in advance of a public meeting so that the TAC can comment on the information.

Mr. Cota commented on the preliminary profile of the relocated Exit 7 and the associated connector road. Mr. Cota pointed out the depth of the cut slopes required to construct the interchange.

Mr. Beauchesne commented on the Exit 6 southbound on-ramps for the Standard Diamond Interchange and the Diverging Diamond Interchange, stating that motorists are likely to be unhappy about having to go three signalized intersections in order to enter the highway from Amoskeag Street.

Mr. Kennedy noted that interestingly the SPUI, which is located further north than the Diamond Interchange alternatives may result in more of the Eddy Road northbound to I-293 southbound movement to be diverted to Exit 5. This factor could influence whether the southbound on-ramp at Exit 6 needs to be a single or a two-lane on-ramp.

Mr. Kennedy outlined the schedule for the next TAC meeting. Mr. Kennedy stated that the Study Team will be asking the TAC to meet monthly to review information. Mr. Kennedy mentioned that once the alternatives evaluation has been completed and the TAC has reviewed the information, the next Public Meeting will likely be schedule for late April or early May.

Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Cota thanked the TAC for attending the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.