



**Meeting  
Notes**

Attendees: David Beauchesne – City of Manchester  
Bruce Thomas – City of Manchester  
Mark Lemay – Town of Goffstown  
Tim White – SNHPC  
Susan Huard - MCC  
Jamie Sikora- FHWA  
Keith Cota – NHDOT  
David Smith – NHDOT  
Nancy Spaulding – NHDOT  
Mike Dugas - NHDOT  
Marc Laurin - NHDOT  
Marty Kennedy - VHB  
Dale Abbott - VHB

Date/ Time: November 14, 2013  
1:00 – 2:00 PM

Project No.: 52196.00

Place: Manchester Community College

Re: I-293 Exits 6 and 7  
Manchester #16099  
Advisory Committee Meeting #9

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. The agenda included a review of the draft report, a discussion on where we go from here to complete the study, and a discussion on the next phases of the project.

Mr. Kennedy presented the draft report and summarized the major conclusions. In reviewing the draft report, Mr. Kennedy reminded the TAC of the purpose of the Planning Study, explained the formatting of the draft report, and provided a brief overview of each chapter. Mr. Kennedy summarized the study conclusions as follows:

- There are substantial deficiencies within the corridor and there is a range of reasonable alternatives that can be advanced to the next phase.
- The No Build Alternative will not address the identified deficiencies.
- TDM/ TSM actions alone will not address the identified deficiencies.
- Additional environmental evaluation is needed to understand impacts to the Merrimack River.
- Widening I-293 through the segment south of Exit 6 will involve careful consideration of potential impacts to the Historic Mill District on the west side and the Merrimack River on the east side.
- I-293 will need to be widened to a 6-lane section. However, the projected travel demand for the segment through and north of Exit 7 could remain at four lanes. Regardless, the Exit 7 interchange should be constructed to accommodate a 6-lane section.
- At Exit 6, the Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) alternative meets the study purpose, provides acceptable operating conditions, and distributes traffic well. The diamond interchange

alternatives, with the exception of the Diamond Interchange with Roundabouts, also meet the study purpose and provide acceptable operating conditions. However, these alternatives do not distribute the traffic as well as the SPUI. The Roundabout alternative does not work well.

- At Exit 7, reconfiguring the interchange at its current location will moderately meet the capacity and safety study purpose. However, the limited spacing between the interchange and Exit 6 is not ideal. Each of the alternatives that involve relocating the Exit 7 interchange to the north will operate well and meet both the capacity and safety study purposes.

Mr. Kennedy provided an overview of the Project Process. He indicated that the Planning Study (Part A) will be complete by 12/ 31/ 2013. The next phase (Part B) will consist of Environmental Documentation and Preliminary Engineering. The final phase (Part C) will include Final Design.

Mr. Kennedy gave an overview of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which is a requirement of projects receiving federal funding. He presented a flow chart of the NEPA processing options for minor/ major projects. Mr. Kennedy noted that in scoping the next phase of the project, a discussion will be needed to determine if an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared.

Mr. Kennedy identified a list of next steps in moving forward with the project:

- Distribute Report to the Public.
- Final Public Meeting (Scheduled for December 11<sup>th</sup>).
- Planning Study Phase is Complete on December 31st.
- Prepare Environmental Documentation (Part B).
- Special Committee Public/ Hearing/ Layout Approval.
- Prepare an Interchange Modification Report (IMR).
- Final Design/ ROW Acquisition/ Construction.

**Throughout and following the presentation, the following comments/questions were raised:**

- Mr. David Beauchesne asked that if Exit 7 is relocated to the north, will the existing Exit 7 southbound on-ramp be eliminated.

Mr. Kennedy responded that it would.

- Mr. Tim White noted that he had several comments on the draft report and asked what would be the best way to submit his comments.

Mr. Kennedy asked if Mr. White could scan/ or summarize his comments and provide them by email.

Mr. White stated that he would summarize and email his comments in the next day or so.

- Mr. Keith Cota asked the TAC if they felt the draft report captured the main issues to move the study forward.

Mr. Mark Lemay stated that he was happy with the study.

Mr. Carl Quiram stated that he has not yet completed his review of the draft report, but what he has read accurately captures the comments of the TAC and what has been identified at the public meetings.

- Mr. Quiram asked if the “Envision” process developed by the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI), would be used in the next phase of the project and whether it would add strength to the Study.

Mr. Kennedy stated that he couldn't answer that question yet, but acknowledged that it will need to be discussed in the scoping for the next phase of the project.

Mr. Cota noted that the “Envision” process and FHWA’s “Invest” tool are very similar, but does not know whether or not there would be an advantage to using one over the other. Mr. Cota stated that the Department will likely look to use the “Invest” tool because FHWA uses it and the FHWA is the lead federal agency for the project. Mr. Cota stated that a decision tool such as “Invest” or “Envision” could be very useful in reaching consensus among the Natural and Cultural Resource Agencies.

Mr. Quiram followed up by stating that based on the research that he has conducted, the “Envision” process and “Invest” tool appear to be similar and he doesn’t believe there will be much to lose in choosing one over the other.

Mr. Cota mentioned that one of his concerns with using either tool would be the potential of slowing the entire process.

Mr. Quiram felt that although either tool could initially slow the process, he felt that in the long run the tool could help us reach consensus faster.

- Mr. Cota outlined the next steps for the project and noted that he wouldn’t expect the next phase to go as quickly as the Planning Study, as more agencies will become involved in the process. Mr. Cota specifically addressed:
  - The Project is in the draft Ten Year Plan.
  - Availability of Turnpike Funds to fund Part B.
  - Setting up a broader more diverse TAC for Part B.
  - Part A of the project to be completed by end of the year.
  - Part B (NEPA, Public Outreach, Preliminary Design), tentatively to kick off during the summer of 2014.
- Mr. White clarified that the project is in the draft Ten Year Plan, but noted that is contingent upon a toll increase.

Mr. Cota noted that there are two ways to increase revenue sources: Increasing the state gasoline tax for Federal/ State projects, and by increasing Turnpike tolling.

- Mr. Jamie Sikora noted that he was thinking that the project would move directly to an EIS.

Mr. Cota thought that the next phase of the project could be completed through an Environmental Assessment (EA).

Mr. Beauchesne asked if the Black Brook stream crossing associated with Alternatives 10A/ 10B could be completed under an EA.

Mr. Cota responded that the stream crossing could be addressed in an EA.

Mr. Beauchesne expressed concern that it only takes one environmental group to potentially hold up the next phase and for that reason it will be important to settle on the most appropriate process (EA or EIS).

Mr. Quiram asked if the FHWA “Invest” tool is used in an EA.

Mr. Sikora stated that “Invest” is not used in an EA.

Mr. Quiram suggested a meeting with the Resource Agencies be held early to get their input on using either Invest or Envision to reach consensus.

Mr. Cota agreed with Mr. Quiram and stated that a copy of the Planning Study would be provided to each of the Resource Agencies and that they would be asked to participate in the next phase of the project. Mr. Cota noted the importance of starting a dialogue with the Resource Agencies in regards to the tools available and scoping the next phase of the project. Mr. Cota expressed concern about the project getting bogged down in the next phase of the process should an EIS be used to document the potential project impacts.

Mr. Sikora followed up by stating that the FHWA has streamlined the EIS process to help speed up the process.

- Mr. Beauchesne thanked the Manchester Community College (MCC) for use of their facilities.

Ms. Susan Huard stated the MCC was happy to be able to host the TAC meetings and allow the community to see the facilities. Ms. Huard also welcomed the TAC back for any future meetings.

- Mr. Cota also thanked Ms. Huard and the MCC for use of their facilities.
- Mr. Bruce Thomas asked Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Cota if there were any surprises identified during the course of the study.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the study proceeded fairly smoothly. Good feedback was received from the TAC and the public throughout the process.

Mr. Cota identified two surprises. At Exit 6 there are two alternatives that seem to work really well at addressing the issues in that area. Secondly, at the location of the proposed Exit 7 interchange. Mr. Cota noted that the terrain is very difficult north of the MCC and prior to the Planning Study was uncertain as to how well an alignment could be engineered through this area. Mr. Cota also noted that he had expected the environmental impacts (direct wetland impacts in particular) to be much higher than those identified in the study.

- Mr. Thomas asked if Environmental Agencies should be included on the TAC in the next phase of the project.

Mr. Cota noted that in the next phase of the project the Department would be reaching out to the communities to include additional members from groups such as the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, as well as the Resource Agencies.

Mr. Thomas asked if these groups should have been included in the Planning Study.

Mr. Sikora responded that it is tough to get TAC member participation from the Resource Agencies during the Planning Study Phase of a project.

Mr. Beauchesne suggested a member from each of the City of Manchester's Conservation Commission, Alderman's Transportation Committee, and Planning Board.

Mr. Cota agreed and stated the goal will be to capture good representation from each of the communities and Resource Agencies. Mr. Cota also noted that the next phase of the project would include additional public involvement such as having regular meetings with the local communities, and neighborhood meetings to ensure an involved process.

Mr. Cota and Mr. Kennedy thanked the TAC for their hard work and participation throughout the Planning Study and hoped to see them on the TAC for the next phase of the project.

Mr. Kennedy reminded the TAC to provide their comments on the draft report as soon as possible so the draft report can be posted in advance of the December 11<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.