



Meeting Notes

Place: Manchester Community College

Date: November 16, 2016

Notes Taken by: Karen Huberdeau

Time: 1-2:15 pm

Project #: 52392.01

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

ATTENDEES

Keith Cota	-	NHDOT
Marc Laurin	-	NHDOT
Trent Zanes	-	NH DOT
Jamie Sikora	-	FHWA
Keith Hirschmann	-	City of Manchester
Bill Klubben	-	City of Manchester
Bruce Thomas	-	City of Manchester
Adam Jacobs	-	Town of Goffstown
Meghan Theriault	-	Town of Goffstown
Nate Miller	-	SNHPC
Susan Huard	-	Manchester Community College
Marty Kennedy	-	VHB
Frank Koczalka	-	VHB
Karen Huberdeau	-	VHB

Mr. Marty Kennedy, VHB's project manager for the project, began by discussing the meeting's agenda. He informed the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members that the project team met with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) administration on Monday, November 14th to discuss the recommended proposed action. He reminded everyone that there has yet to be any final decisions made on the proposed action and that presented alternatives were still only recommendations.

Mr. Kennedy provided a brief overview of the project purpose which is to address capacity, safety, and access related deficiencies along a 3.5-mile portion of I-293 beginning north of Exit 5 and ending north of Exit 7 by:

- Correcting geometric and safety deficiencies while reducing congestion at problem locations;
- Accommodating future traffic growth related to commuter trips and the transportation of commercial goods and services through the corridor; and
- Improving access to the highway consistent with the long-term vision of the communities of Manchester and Goffstown.

Mr. Kennedy then explained how the design team has worked to modify the alignments of the interchange connector road at Exit 7 and Front Street. He described that Front Street will now T-in to the connector road due to the traffic

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analysis showing that the heavy flow of traffic through this intersection will be to and from the north. He explained that this new alignment will reduce traffic on Front Street, making it more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. He added that this alignment will provide Manchester Community College (MCC) with a driveway off of the connector road, and also preserve the property they have designated for athletic fields. Additionally, he stated that the driveways for the abutting condominium communities will need to be reconfigured.

Ms. Susan Huard, representing MCC, stated that the college is very happy with the new configuration.

Mr. Kennedy went on to discuss the recommended proposed action for Exit 6. He reminded the TAC members that the Exit 6 interchange is very complex due to additional connections to Front Street and Eddy Road that need to be maintained. He explained that once the proposed action has been approved that a more detailed analysis will be performed.

He discussed the Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) at Exit 6, explaining that the interchange would be above the interstate, resulting in a large, costly bridge. He added that the SPUI alternative would also require an additional bridge over the interstate to connect Eddy road and Front Street. He stated that operationally, the SPUI is not ideal because of the close proximity of the signals along Amoskeag Road, which creates large queues and a poor level of service. Additionally, Mr. Kennedy mentioned that the SPUI has the highest construction cost and challenging construction phasing.

He provided a brief overview of the diamond interchange configurations at Exit 6. He discussed that the standard diamond interchange also has issues with signal proximity and queuing along the connector road over the interstate. He added that although the Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) works better operationally, that there is still significant queuing along Amoskeag Street with this alternative.

Mr. Kennedy continued to explain the Offset Diamond Interchange. He described this alternative as simple, stating that the signals are better spaced, and operationally it works the best. He added that the volume of traffic around the southbound ramps is fairly high, introducing the need for the flyover ramp and an additional bridge. Overall, Mr. Kennedy recommended that the Offset Diamond Interchange be the preferred alternative at Exit 6.

Mr. Kennedy then provided a summary of the alternatives at Exit 7.

- What will happen if Exit 7 is upgraded at its existing location?
 1. Physically it can be constructed, but it is not ideal due to the close proximity to Exit 6
 2. Very little traffic diversion occurs, traffic will likely still use Exit 6
- What will happen if Exit 7 is relocated to the north?
 1. Improved access to the Hackett Hill Master Plan area
 2. Reduction of traffic on Goffstown Road
 - a. 24% in AM
 - b. 19% in PM
- What will happen if a connection is provided across Black Brook?
 1. Improved connection to Goffstown's industrial zoned land
 2. Reduction of traffic on Goffstown Road
 - a. 32% in AM

b. 32% in PM

Mr. Kennedy explained that there are multiple alternatives that are still being considered for the Goffstown Road and Straw Road intersection that will be upgraded if the Goffstown Connector Road is constructed. Various alternatives include a standard 4-way intersection, a roundabout, and an offset intersection; all of which have varying impacts to abutting properties.

Mr. Kennedy then turned the meeting over to Mr. Frank Koczalka, representing VHB's highway design team, to discuss the constructability of the various alternatives at Exit 6. Mr. Koczalka explained that the Offset Diamond interchange allows for much simpler construction phasing as a large portion of the interchange and ramps can be constructed offline, with minor impacts to traffic. He added that the other alternatives have more complex phasing concerns with existing and proposed ramp crossings and additional bridges over the interstate.

Mr. Kennedy then discussed that there will likely be operational issues at the Coolidge Ave intersection once the new Exit 6 interchange is built because the increased capacity at Exit 6 will draw additional vehicles through the neighborhood and down to the Coolidge Ave intersection with Goffstown Road. Mr. Kennedy suggested that a meeting be scheduled with the City of Manchester to discuss options in this area in order to improve the traffic operations and safety concerns.

Mr. Kennedy briefly discussed the bicycle/pedestrian connections that have been analyzed within the project area. He described the Manchester Bike Master Plan, stating that there are two major pedestrian routes along Front Street and Goffstown Road that will need to have access through the Exit 6 interchange and across the river to downtown Manchester. He explained that there is a potential for a multi-use path to run beside Eddy Road and the future flyover ramp that will connect down to Eddy Road and will direct pedestrians down to the Notre Dame Bridge as Amoskeag Bridge is currently not designed to safely accommodate pedestrians.

Mr. Kennedy displayed the current concept for a pedestrian bridge over the Merrimack River presented by Civic Moxie as a part of Manchester's Master plan. Mr. Nate Miller, representing the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC), discussed that residents consider I-293 a barrier through the City and would like to improve east to west and north to south access through the Exit 6 area.

Mr. Kennedy responded by stating that the proposed reconfiguration of Exit 6 and Exit 7 will reduce traffic on Front Street and Goffstown Road, making them more bicycle/pedestrian friendly. He added that the multi-use path will get pedestrians through the interchange area safely, but they will need to cross the river elsewhere as it seems very unlikely that a bike path and pedestrian bridge over the river will be built under this project. He added that the current design of the interstate widening already cantilevers over the river leaving minimal room to accommodate a bicycle path.

Mr. Keith Cota, NHDOT's project manager for the project, discussed that there is a need to meet with the City of Manchester to discuss plans for the Amoskeag Bridge upgrades and whether or not they are willing to pay for additional width to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians. Mr. Cota implied that it is not the intent of the project to upgrade the Amoskeag Bridge.

Mr. Keith Hirschmann, an Alderman for the City of Manchester, discussed that there is a need to maintain/improve pedestrian accommodations along Eddy Road as there is a large amount of foot traffic today. He also informed the committee that the City just approved a conditional agreement for 8 townhomes off of Coolidge Ave, along the ridge

above Eddy Road. Mr. Bruce Thomas, representing the City of Manchester, agreed to provide VHB with the site plans for that development.

The meeting continued with additional dialog about the future plans for the Amoskeag Bridge. Mr. Keith Hirschmann stated that there is a plan to resurface and repair the bridge in the near future. Mr. Bruce Thomas said that major repairs to the bridge are scheduled for 2024.

Mr. Kennedy then discussed the project schedule. He informed the committee that the next public meeting will be pushed to the beginning of 2017, during this meeting they will present the proposed action to the public. He added that there is still a large amount of work to be done before the meeting, and there are still important decisions to be made.

Mr. Kennedy reminded the committee that they will need to set up meetings with the City of Manchester to discuss the Coolidge Ave intersection and bicycle/ pedestrian connectivity, as well as the Town of Goffstown to discuss the Goffstown Connector Road.

Mr. Hirschmann discussed that if Montgomery Street will become the primary intersection, then safety will need to be improved. He informed the committee that there has been accidents at that location which has created the need for a roadway safety audit through the HSIP program. Mr. Kennedy will call Bruce Thomas to follow up on these discussions and to set up a meeting with the City.

Q: Is the plan to build Exit 7 before Exit 6?

A: Yes, that will be the recommended approach, that way traffic will be diverted from Exit 6 to the new Exit 7 and aid in the traffic control and construction of Exit 6.

Comment: Manchester Community College is on spring break March 12-19, will be a good time to hold the next Public Informational Meeting.

A: Noted.

Q: Are the properties along Eddy Road going to be impacted?

A: The properties abutting the interstate will be impacted, however the properties along the west side of Eddy Road are not being shown as impacted at this time.

Q: If the gas stations are impacted, will they receive relocation costs?

A: Yes, there is a formal Right-Of-Way process that will take place at the end of this phase.

Comment: Recommendation to reach out to each property owner that will be affected before the next public meeting.

A: Noted.

Q: Should a meeting be set up with the Town of Goffstown before the next public meeting?

A: Mr. Adam Jacobs, representing the Town of Goffstown, responded that a meeting with the Goffstown Economic Development Committee would be beneficial.

A discussion took place on the recent decision to remove the truck traffic restrictions on Goffstown Road. Mr. Hirschmann stated that Goffstown Road has become a "mini-highway" with speeds close to 50 mph. He added that the City is looking into traffic calming measures in that area to slow traffic down as the posted speed is 20 mph.

Another discussion began about the limits of the project and how far the funds would reach past the interchanges and onto the local roads. Mr. Keith Cota stressed that a series of meetings will need to take place to discuss the project limits and how the additional improvements will be funded. He noted that the Goffstown Connector Road is currently estimated to cost 6-7 million dollars.

Mr. Kennedy thanked everyone for attending. The meeting ended at 2:15 pm.