



MEETING MINUTES

Hooksett U.S. 3/NH 28 – Project 29611

Date: December 11, 2023
Time: 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM
Location: Hooksett Town Hall
Re: Working Group Meeting #7

Attendees:

NHDOT

Dave Smith, Project Manager
Jon Hebert, Senior Design Engineer
Rich Radwanski, District 5 Engineer

WSP

Liviu Sfintescu, Project Manager
Delia Makhetha, Public Involvement

Working Group Members

Andre Garron, Hooksett Town Administrator
Bruce Thomas, Hooksett Town Engineer
Nate Miller, Southern New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (SNHRPC)
William Rearick, Hooksett Schools Superintendent,
Jesse Frail, Resident
Michelle Canning, Pro Technologies
State Rep. JR Hoell, State Representative
Tom Osborne, Osbornes Farm and Garden Centers, LLC
Tony Crawford, Circle T Car Wash
Joseph Stalker, Hooksett Fire Department*
Jake Robie, Hooksett Police Department*
David Boutin, Hooksett Town Council*
Lawrence Yassanye, Southern New Hampshire University*

*Invited but not in Attendance

Meeting Discussion:

MEETING WELCOME



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- Dave Smith (NHDOT) welcomed Working Group (WG) attendees.
- New WG members were introduced, and included resident, Jesse Frail, State Representative JR Hoell, and area business representatives Tom Osborne, Michelle Canning, and Tony Crawford.

MEETING GUIDELINES REVIEWED AND GROUP EXPECTATIONS

- Dave Smith (NHDOT) outlined the goals of the meeting:
 - Communication with all Project WG members is open, honest, early, continuous, and most importantly, respectful.
 - Everyone will have an opportunity to provide input in the meeting on the project design.
 - Purpose of this meeting is to obtain input from the WG and to facilitate the flow of information and ideas between the project team, community/public at-large, Town of Hooksett, and NHDOT.
 - Any additional expectations from the WG.
- WG will take consensus at the end of the meeting about preference on roundabout or signalized intersection at Mammoth Road.
- Dave Smith (NHDOT) paused for comments from the WG.
 - JR Hoell (State Rep) asked if items D & E under project components (number of lanes on Rte 3 and shoulder widths) could be reconsidered.
- NHDOT explained that these two items are not up for reconsideration. The 5-lane design was voted on unanimously by the Town Council and Town Planning Board. Shoulder widths are NH state standards. The WG was asked to hold questions until the end of the presentation.

NHDOT AND WSP PRESENTED TO THE WORKING GROUP

- Part of the Presentation explained that this project has been part of 10-year plan since 2017.
- Nate Miller (RPC) explained that the Regional Planning Commissions solicit project needs from towns and prioritize them for inclusion in the state's 10-year plan. The ten-year plan doesn't predetermine what engineering will be done for each project.
- Andre Garron (Town of Hooksett) shared that this project was mentioned in the 10-year plan from 2013-2015. It has been a Town priority, and the wheels were in motion before 2017.
- Liviu Sfintescu (WSP) reviewed the median island revisions made since the October 2023 public meeting and explained that the design of the median islands varies immediately south of the Mammoth Rd intersection depending on the type of intersection at Mammoth Rd (Signalized or roundabout). This is because the roundabout would accommodate U-turns for all vehicle types.
 - From Alice Ave to Silver Ave the center median was maintained.
 - Portland Glass could have access from Leonard Ave.
 - Silver Ave to Shooters Outpost, there is a two-way center turning lane and no median. Shooters Outpost driveway will be relocated slightly.
 - Zachary Drive to Aja Championship Auto Club the median is continuous.



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- From Aja Championship Auto Club to the roundabout, the median island design varies depending on the type of intersection at Mammoth Rd.
- For the roundabout design, the median continues to Embassy Ave. A short section of two-way left turn lane is provided from Embassy to Trek and then the median continues to the roundabout. At Paquette Pools & Spas there would be no left turn out of the property. The team understands that tractor trailers need access, and trucks can make a U-turn at the roundabout. Sam Mechanical Services and Hearth Design Crown Chimney would be limited by median, team is looking at access points on Mammoth Road.
- For the signalized intersection design, the median stops at Aja Championship Auto Club. A short S-shaped median is proposed south of Embassy Avenue and another short median is proposed south of the Mammoth Rd intersection. Paquette's driveway would need to be relocated to the south.
- North of Mammoth Road, the designs are identical, no matter which intersection is selected at Mammoth Rd.
- A continuous median island is proposed from Mammoth Rd to Cinemagic Way.
- There will be a two-way left turn lane for the driveways between Cinemagic Way to Martins Ferry Road.
- Median island proposed just south of the Martins Ferry Road intersection.
- Eversource currently has accesses on Route 3 and Martins Ferry Rd. Proposed design would block left turn access into Eversource from Route 3. This was requested by Eversource to avoid people cutting through their driveway to bypass the signalized intersection.
- The Supreme Plaza would have no left turn access from Route 3 with a median island in place. Supreme Plaza owner wants the island to stop left turns for safety reasons.
- Sam Mechanical would be limited by median, but the business has an access at the back.
- DOT trying to balance access restrictions and safety concerns.

Presentation paused for questions and comments from the WG:

Q: Tom Osborne (Osborne Farm and Garden Centers) asked how many businesses were impacted by median at Alice Ave and silver Ave?

A: Several in the plaza, Plaza Considering improving back access, Portland glass.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MEDIAN ISLANDS

Q: JR Hoell (State Rep) expressed concern that people wanting to make left turns out of Cinemagic and other spots, like Embassy Ave, may have a hard time doing that due to the presence of the adjacent median. He proposed narrowing the median to add a merging lane to allow traffic to turn in and merge into thru traffic.

A: NHDOT said they would look at the feasibility of including a merging lane.



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Q: Jesse Frail (resident) asked how emergency services travelling southbound on Route 3 would get to Brace Avenue and if there are changes to service routes. How would the addition of the median affect emergency service response times?

A: The team noted that emergency services would take a left onto Alice Avenue to access Coaker Avenue/Brace Avenue. The team acknowledged that emergency responders are traveling south from the safety complex to the north and response times would have to be looked at. NHDOT explained that the median islands are designed to be deterrents for big trucks to take left turns, but emergency vehicles can still be accommodated.

Q: Jesse Frail (resident) asked how will a truck needing to go north take a left from points like Osbornes, Urgent Care or Cinemagic?

A: The team explained there will be no change in access at this location. The proposed island will protect these movements.

Q: Jesse Frail (resident) asked the team to explain how can trucks between the roundabout and Alice Avenue turn left?

A: The team explained, there will be no left turns allowed on Route 3 from Leonard Avenue to Silver Avenue.

Q: Jesse Frail (resident) expressed that making the left turn from Alice Avenue onto Mammoth Road should be made safer since more trucks may access this intersection due to the Route 3 median addition.

A: The project team is meeting with businesses in this area to discuss access. A median is proposed on Route 3 at this location this is the highest accident area along the entire corridor.

Q: JR Hoell (State Rep) asked if the accidents are rear end accidents at the Alice Avenue and Mammoth Road traffic signals?

A: Project team said yes, most accident are rear end.

Q: JR Hoell (State Rep) doesn't think the proposed solution will minimize rear end accidents

A: Project Team clarified that the proposed design would improve traffic flow thereby minimizing stop and go situations.

- DOT proposed improvements will create dedicated left turn lanes at the following intersections:
 - Alice Avenue
 - Leonard/Silver Avenue
 - Zachary Drive
 - Embassy Avenue
 - Trek bike shop
 - Cinemagic Way
 - Martins Ferry Road.



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Q: JR Hoell (State Rep) asked about impacts to Shooters Outpost?

A: Project team said access will stay the same by moving the Shooters Outpost driveway.

Q: Tom Osborne (Osbornes Farm and Garden Centers) likes the roundabout and said many traffic users may use the roundabout to turn around to go north instead of trying to make a left turn out of Cinemagic way. Given the ability to make a U-turn with the roundabout, he asked if a roundabout can also be designed at Alice Avenue?

A: Project Team explained that the Alice Avenue intersection might be tight for a roundabout. There would likely be many ROW impacts due to the steep grade along Alice Avenue. NHDOT is looking to improve the grade near Crown Trophy and would reconstruct the driveway. NHDOT will assess the possibility of adding a roundabout at Alice Avenue. NHDOT will also post the profile online for public review.

Q: Andre Garron (Town of Hooksett) noted he is interested in the idea of a roundabout at Alice Avenue and Mammoth Road. What would be the footprint of a roundabout at Alice Ave?

A: NHDOT explained a roundabout would likely have a similar footprint as at Mammoth Rd, but the grade of Alice Ave is the concern.

Q: Andre Garron (Town of Hooksett) asked how large trucks and emergency vehicles can navigate the proposed roundabout?

A: NHDOT explained that the roundabout has been designed to accommodate large trucks. The project team showed the roundabout navigation simulation video.

Q: Andre Garron (Town of Hooksett) asked where will passenger cars be able to make U-turns?

A: The Project Team explained that safe U-turns will be possible at the signalized intersections at Alice Avenue and Whitehall Road/Martins Ferry Road and the roundabout at Mammoth Rd.

MAMMOTH RD INTERSECTION DESIGN

Q: JR Hoell (State Representative) asked whether the median island design layout from the signalized intersection design can also work with the roundabout design.

A: Yes, the two median designs can be blended, but NHDOT is looking to balance safety and mobility. With the roundabout design, Paquette Pools and Spas would have no left turn access. With the Mammoth Rd signalized intersection design, the driveway for Paquette's Pools and Spas drive would be relocated. NHDOT reemphasized the designs presented are not final.

William Rearick (Superintendent of Hooksett School District) expressed that additional traffic at Alice Avenue and Mammoth Road would be a concern, especially from the perspective of school bus traffic, primarily in the afternoon.



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Q: JR Hoell (State Representative) stated that any additional traffic to Alice Avenue won't work well, including buses & trucks. Feels a roundabout at Alice Avenue would be best.

A: NHDOT will bring the Alice Avenue roundabout idea to the NHDOT Front Office and then will look to develop a concept.

Q: Liviu Sfintescu (WSP) asked the WG what other businesses around Alice Avenue where the median is proposed have tractor trailer deliveries.

A: The WG reported the following businesses in this area have tractor trailer deliveries:

- Second Brook Café (at Community Plaza)
- Chantilly's Restaurant & Pub

Q: JR Hoell (State Representative) asked the project team to look how other states incorporate a median turn lane for traffic merging

A: The design of median turning merge lanes, may not be part of NHDOT standards. However, NHDOT will investigate to see if it is feasible.

SIDEWALKS AND BIKE LANES

NHDOT's preference is to have sidewalks on each side of the roadway. Following Public Informational Meeting #2, NHDOT proposes sidewalks on both side of the roadway south of Mammoth Road and the sidewalk only on the west side north of Mammoth Road. The sidewalk on the east side of the roadway north of Mammoth Road has been eliminated and a grass panel would be constructed instead. This grass panel could be converted into a sidewalk later if this portion of the corridor redevelops. The roadway footprint will be the same with the grass panel as it is with the sidewalk.

Q: JR Hoell (State Representative) questioned the need for a sidewalk from Shooters Outpost to Chantilly's. Can the sidewalk be eliminated to reduce right-of-way acquisitions?

A: NHDOT noted that a typical roadway section is same width with or without sidewalks, since space is needed for maintenance, storage, and utilities (which could be under the sidewalk panel) which means right-of way (ROW) impacts would be the same. The Town of Hooksett would be responsible for sidewalks maintenance. As the design progresses, there will be more discussions with the Town on sidewalk maintenance.

Q: Jesse Frail (resident) asked the team to consider a crosswalk at Silver Avenue. As a resident at Brace Avenue, she sees greater foot traffic at Silver Avenue and feels a crosswalk would be important to provide pedestrians on the west side of Route 3 access to A-1 market.

A: The project team will investigate this suggestion.

Q: Brue Thomas (Town of Hooksett) shared that he feels sidewalks are needed because the corridor is dangerous to walk. There have been 2 pedestrian deaths along the corridor. With the addition of



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sidewalks people working at the businesses could also take advantage to walk the corridor during lunch. Overall, the corridor will be safer with sidewalks.

Q: Nate Miller (SNHRPC) asked what treatment would be proposed for mid-block crosswalks? Depending on the treatment there may be a need for pedestrian/driver education since the new signals may be different.

A: NHDOT said that a multi-lane roadway typically requires large hawk signals. Median islands may be used for pedestrian refuge.

Q: Jesse Frail (resident) asked if the crosswalk treatment would be audible for hearing impaired?

A: NHDOT responded yes, the crosswalk will accommodate for the hearing impaired.

Q: JR Hoell (State Representative) mentioned that 24-ft of the proposed typical section is for shoulders and sidewalks. Given this is a large width, would DOT reconsider the shoulder and sidewalk widths?

A: NHDOT will review the shoulder and sidewalk widths.

Q: Jesse Frail (resident) asked if there will be any bike lane marking or just a wide bike shoulder?

A: NHDOT said it would be a bike lane/shoulder that accommodates bikes, but no bicyclist markings are planned.

Q: Tom Osborne (Osbornes Farm and Garden Centers) asked if the bike data available is per year?

A: NHDOT said yes data is per year and noted that only people using the Strava app were accounted for in the meeting presentation. So the bike traffic may be higher.

Q: JR Hoell (State Representative) asked if bike solutions must be the same to the north and south of Mammoth Road?

A: NHDOT said bike solution does not have to be the same. However, due to state standards, the shoulder needs to maintain certain minimums for maintenance and breakdown lanes. The project team also pointed out that during the final design phase the width of the median island may be reduced which will decrease right-of-way impacts.

PROJECT NEXT STEPS

NHDOT shared that the project team is getting closer to a preferred alternative, but the team is still meeting with businesses. Once there is a preferred alternative the project will move to a formal Public Hearing.

Q: JR Hoell (State Representative) asked who sits on the panel for the public hearing?

A: NHDOT shared that the three-person panel is selected by the Executive Council.

Q: Andre Garron (Town of Hooksett) asked if the project webpage will be updated with these new roll plots so the Town can use these for an upcoming Town Council meeting.



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A: NHDOT will post the documents used in the meeting to the project webpage.

Q: Jesse Frail (resident) said the public doesn't want the five-lane option, they want the three-lane option, as expressed in the October public meeting. Since the Hooksett Town Planning Board and Town Council voted for the five-lane option, does that mean there is no overriding this?

A: NHDOT noted that the survey responses and Town vote override the public meeting.

JR Hoell (State Representative) said it is important for the project team to revisit the three-lane and five-lane options. He thinks the upcoming January 10th town meeting will be the next opportunity to discuss the three-lane and five-lane options.

Tom Osborne (Osbornes Farm and Garden Centers) noted he is still concerned about how residents in the southern part of the corridor are being impacted by the proposed design.

Q: Andre Garron (Town of Hooksett) asked whether would medians still be proposed, if the Town wants to revisit the three-lane option?

A: NHDOT would look to keep similar medians in place for safety.

Q: JR Hoell (State Representative) asked if there is a 5-lane solution with two roundabouts?

A: NHDOT will need to talk to the front office about the possibility of an Alice Avenue roundabout.

JR Hoell said it is hard for him to imagine a tractor trailer through a roundabout.

Q: Tom Osborne (Osbornes Farm and Garden Centers) asked if the roundabout simulation showing tractor trailers was developed specific to the Hooksett intersection.

A: NHDOT said yes, the stimulation is specific to Hooksett and shows the largest tractor trailer vehicles currently on the road.

Dave Smith (NHDOT) asked the group to vote or express opinions on the Mammoth Rd intersection options. The following comments were received from the attendees:

- Andre Garron (Town of Hooksett) believes the roundabout will work.
- Tom Osborne (Osbornes Farm and Garden Centers) likes roundabout; concern is Paquette's access. Also asked who will be responsible for maintain islands? Concerned about the reality of maintaining the aesthetics.
- Bruce Thomas (Town of Hooksett) appreciated concerns and responses shared today.
- JR Hoell (State Representative) said Shooters Outpost access to Zachary Rd is bad.
- Nate Miller (SNHRPC) supports the roundabout.
- Liviu Sfintescu (WSP) shared that the survey showed polarizing results between the three-lane and five-lane options.
- Andre Garron (Town of Hooksett) when the Town Planning Board and Town Council was considering the three-lane and five-lane options, they were considering how the roadway would



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be in 20 years. The traffic analysis shows that the three-lane option would degrade faster than the five-lane option.

- Dave Smith (NHDOT) noted that, if the three-lane option is utilized, it will have conflict/merge points beyond the signalized intersections where the thru lanes merge into one single lane. These conflict points are not present in the five-lane option.
- Jon Hebert (NHDOT) this is still the preliminary design process and changes will occur including width changes. The plots are currently showing the worst-case scenario.
- Rich Radwanski (NHDOT) asked what is the value of allowing left turn out of Cinemagic if there is a roundabout close by?
A: NHDOT will look at prohibiting left turns out of Cinemagic Way.
- JR Hoell (State Representative) said the roundabout resolves the U-turn issues.
- Richard Radwanski (NHDOT) left turning capability at Shooters Outpost is needed because Zachary Drive is a private road.
A: NHDOT stated that the design will not force any traffic to Zachary Dr.
- JR Hoell (NHDOT) asked if there is a way for NHDOT to take ownership of a section of Zachary Drive?
A: DOT wouldn't look to take partial ownership. Bruce Thomas (Town of Hooksett) agreed that the Town and State do not want to take ownership.
- Jesse Frail (resident) questioned whether temporary improvements, such as installing left turn signals at the signalized intersections, can be implemented now, before the Route 3 project goes into construction years out, to help with safety issues.
A: NHDOT will investigate this suggestion.
- Tony Crawford (Circle T Car Wash) appreciates the removal of the median at Circle T Car Wash and asked whether there is any chance for the median to come back following discussion that NHDOT may have with other businesses.
A: NHDOT doesn't envision the median to be brought back into the design. The NHDOT Front Office is on board with existing changes including the median design proposed today. The project team does expect refinements to be made near Paquette's Pools and Spas.
- Tony Crawford (Circle T Car Wash) supports the roundabout but concerned with construction timeline.
- Michelle Canning (Pro Technologies) appreciates the corridor improvements shown today. Pro Technologies is still greatly impacted. Supports the idea of looking at hybrid with a roundabout and the medians from the signalized intersection design. Concerned about Alice Avenue intersection safety and favors looking at a roundabout. Asked the project team to continue to work with areas businesses.

At the end of the roundtable, Dave Smith (NHDOT) asked the WG if, as a group, they support the roundabout at Mammoth Road.

- WG supports the roundabout at Mammoth Road

Q: Michelle Canning (Pro Technologies) asked how Paquette's Pools & Spas feels about the roundabout.



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A: NHDOT said Paquette's Pools and Spas is concerned with either design at Mammoth Rd (roundabout or signalized intersection) and NHDOT will continue to work with them.

Q: Tony Crawford supports the idea of adding a roundabout at Alice Avenue and asked if a roundabout was added at Alice Avenue, what would that do to the construction timeline?

A: Dave Smith (NHDOT) said impact would likely be cost related, wouldn't impact the construction timeline much.

Dave Smith (NHDOT) thanked the WG for their time and closed the meeting at 11:36 am.

ACTION ITEMS

- NHDOT will assess a roundabout at Alice Avenue.
- NHDOT will assess shortening the splitter island at Paquette Pools.
- NHDOT will assess if left turn merge lanes would be a possibility along the corridor.
- NHDOT will assess including a mid-block crossing at Silver Avenue.
- NHDOT will assess the shoulder widths throughout the corridor to see if widths can be reduced.
- NHDOT will post the latest roll plots and presentation to the project website.
- NHDOT will look at options to preclude/discourage left turns out of Cinemagic Way.
- NHDOT will assess opportunities/possibilities to add left turn signals at existing signalized intersections now, ahead of any project construction.
- NHDOT will assess a blended median island layout of the signalized intersection plots and the roundabout intersection plots.
- NHDOT will assess the operation of the Alice Avenue and Mammoth Road intersection considering potential additional truck traffic that may use this location once the median island is constructed.