

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
BUREAU OF HIGHWAY DESIGN**

**CONFERENCE REPORT**

**PROJECT:** WOLFEBORO 29615  
NH ROUTE 28 – PICKERING CORNER TO ALTON TOWN LINE

**DATE OF CONFERENCE:** July 8, 2021, 2:00 pm

**LOCATION OF CONFERENCE:** Great Hall, Wolfeboro Town Hall  
84 South Main St, Wolfeboro

**SUBJECT:** Project Advisory Committee Meeting #2

**ATTENDANCE:**

**PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Peter Gilligan	Brewster Academy		X
Susan Harrington	Brewster Academy		X
Mary DeVries	Chamber of Commerce, Wolfeboro EDC	X	
Bob Leavy	Citizen-At-Large		X
Cindy Melanson	Citizen-At-Large	X	
Roger Murray	Citizen-At-Large	X	
Bob Tougher	Citizen-At-Large	X	
Maryann Belanger	Governor Wentworth School District		X
Jeremy Roberge, CEO	Huggins Hospital		X
David Lynch	Kingswood Golf Course		X
Susan Slack	Lakes Region Planning Commission		X
Alan Hanscom	NHDOT District 3		X
Linda Murray	Town of Wolfeboro, Board of Selectmen	X	
Paul O'Brien	Town of Wolfeboro, Board of Selectmen		X
Kathy Barnard	Town of Wolfeboro, Planning Board Rep	X	
James Pineo	Town of Wolfeboro, Town Manager	X	

**PROJECT LEAD TEAM (PLT)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Jason Ayotte	NHDOT Project Manager	X	
Leah Savage	NHDOT Roadway Section Group Leader		X
Jon Hebert	NHDOT Roadway Section Senior Engineer	X	
Tavis Austin	Town of Wolfeboro, Director of Planning	X	
Dave Ford	Town of Wolfeboro, Director of Public Works	X	

**GUESTS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Rebecca Martin	NHDOT Senior Environmental Manager

**NOTES ON CONFERENCE:**

This meeting was scheduled to reintroduce the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to the Wolfeboro 29615 – NH Route 28/South Main Street Reconstruction Project (Project), provide an updated Public Outreach Schedule, provide an overview of the NHDOT design progress and important meetings during the pandemic, present the Draft Purpose & Need (P&N) Statements, and review potential Alternative Considerations and Rating Criteria. General discussion, concerns and questions are summarized below:

- I. Public Involvement Plan (PIP) – Jason Ayotte led the reintroduction of the Project Lead Team, Project Advisory Committee, Public Outreach Schedule, and Project Website. The PIP includes a brief description of PAC roles and responsibilities, how the members will help shape NHDOT decisions throughout the design process, and the anticipated schedule required to present the project at a formal Public Hearing and advertise the Project advertise for contractors to bid. The project has been delayed due to the pandemic and staff transitions, however the Department is evaluating how to meet the original schedule.
  - a. D. Ford added the Project is underfunded, and the Town is considering appropriating funds to assist in completing the Corridor Study vision. Therefore, the project timeline will need to consider the Town’s Capital Improvement Program requirements and schedule.
  
- II. PAC Meeting #1 Meeting Minutes – a very brief overview of the Initial Kick-off meeting, meeting notes, which included review of the Corridor Study and Town Recommendations to NHDOT and requested approval of the meeting minutes by the PAC members.
  - a. The only revision requested to revise Mr. Tougher’s attendance as present at the meeting. A motion to approve by Ms. DeVries, seconded by Ms. Murray and approved by the committee.
  
- III. Project Progress – J. Ayotte and R. Martin reviewed the Department’s progress in 2020 and 2021, highlighting the Environmental, Property and Right-of-Way, Survey, Traffic, as well as Drainage and Water Quality design efforts to move the Project data collection efforts forward. Discussion items consisted of:
  - a. The Cultural Resource Review may be one of the largest efforts for the project. R. Martin has identified over 140 properties that will require documentation of the potential impacts to the property. The documentation will need to be prepared and presented to the NH Division of Historic Resources (NHDHR) for review and determination of any adverse effect.
  - b. R. Martin sent an initial outreach letter specifically to identify mitigation priorities and opportunities already identified within the Town. Any opportunities already identified by the Town are helpful to present to NHDES if mitigation is required for the project.

- c. A brief introduction of FHWA’s Consulting Parties opportunity as another opportunity to provide input through the Section 106 process. As a consulting party, the process is in addition to the public outreach proposed for the project, and anyone interested may contact FHWA to be considered:  
  
 Jamie Sikora  
 Environmental Program Manager  
 Federal Highway Administration, NH Division Office  
 53 Pleasant Street, Suite 2200 Concord, NH 03301  
[Jamie.Sikora@fhwa.dot.gov](mailto:Jamie.Sikora@fhwa.dot.gov)
  - d. Data collection over the past year has consisted of completion of additional topographic survey, development of the existing right-of-way layout, and traffic collection at the Pickering Corner, Crescent Lake Ave, Cristian Ridge Rd, McManus Rd, Pleasant Valley Rd intersections.
  - e. The Design Team has conducted field reviews, evaluated initial drainage conditions, met with NHDES in April, 2021 and has incorporated potential Water Quality Best Management Practices proposed by the Town into the natural and cultural resource reviews.
  - f. In addition, the Design Team utilizing Bureau of Highway Design’s Statewide On-Call Highway Engineering Services Contract has requested Stantec to assist with the alternatives designs and the public hearing schedule.
- IV. Existing Conditions & Project Lead Team Meetings – J. Ayotte and D. Ford presented the Speed Study, Pavement Resurfacing and pedestrian crossing existing condition changes since the initial kick-off meeting.
- a. At the initial kick off meeting, several PAC members identified speeding and inconsistent speed limits as issues of concern. It was noted the variation in posted speeds makes the corridor “confusing” and high travel speeds pose a safety issue for pedestrians trying to cross the road. The Project Team met with NHDOT Bureau of Traffic (BOT) to review and finalize the speed study requested by the Town in April, 2020. As a result of the Town’s initiation, the BOT proposed speed consistency through the corridor and speed enforcement, as well as additional 29615 Project recommendations to introduce traffic calming. NHDOT’s BOT submitted the letter to the Selectboard, which was accepted, and the speed limit was changed to 35 mph from the Alton Town Line to Old Mill Drive with advisory speed limits at the Middleton Road intersection. The 30 mph speed zone between Old Mill Drive and Pickering Corner remains as is.
  - b. 2020 Construction – As part of the NHDOT’s Resurfacing Program, South Main Street received a wearing course overlay and pavement shim. The resurfacing project also upgraded the curb ramps at intersections to meet ADA requirements.
  - c. Pedestrian Crossings – The PAC shared several thoughts on the controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian crossings within the Town.

- i. The Town and Brewster Academy installed the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at the existing Brewster Academy crossing. The RRFB has been in operation since the Spring 2021, however PAC members noted low compliance at the Brewster RRFB. Members stated the RRFB on Center Street appears to have greater compliance and pedestrians utilizing the RRFB, however the Town continues to question the effectiveness.
  - ii. Further discussion regarding compliance, use, and visual concerns about RRFBs at all uncontrolled crossings continued regarding the Town's preferences. With the speed zone change to 35 mph, the Town has the opportunity to add crossings that would not be approved previously, and D. Ford indicated potential RRFBs at the Golf Course Crossing, Town Library, and Huggins Hospital could be installed. Bureau of Traffic has stated during previous meetings that uncontrolled crossings treatments should be consistent within the corridor.
  - iii. Based on previous design meetings with the Town, there is interest to conduct a yielding study to establish a different policy for crossings on State roadways. The Town will need to develop a study with Bureau of Traffic to research compliance of uncontrolled crossings, as well as conduct a study at several similar crossings in the corridor and town wide to understand pedestrian and motorist behavior with the Town of Wolfeboro.
  - iv. B. Tougher noted concern about compliance at the Golf Course and use of golf carts. J. Ayotte explained this is a concern of Bureau of Traffic, which noted State law requires yielding to pedestrians within a crossing, however there is no requirement to yield to bicycles, golf carts or other motorized recreational vehicles at crossings.
- V. Purpose & Need – J. Ayotte explained the reason for the Purpose & Need (P&N) statements, summarized the Problem Statements and Vision created by the 2018 Corridor Study Steering Committee, and shared the Draft P&N developed by the Design Team. The Draft Purpose and Need Statement was developed from the Ten Year Plan project application, Town's Vision, and written to include mobility and safety concerns identified by the PAC. J. Ayotte explained the P&N may be updated throughout the process, but is important to drive why the improvement should be implemented. A goal for the PAC is to provide thoughts and be able to approve a P&N for the next PAC meeting.
- a. The Purpose & Need Statement shared with the PAC is –

*The purpose of the project is to improve NH Route 28 between Pleasant Valley Road and NH Route 109 (Pickering Corner):*

- **Pavement Condition;** *no major improvements have been made to NH Route 28 since the 1930s. As a result, the pavement is deteriorating at the edge of travel way, and maintenance is required routinely at the limits of the concrete slab constructed.*
- **Drainage;** *the existing drainage systems and flat grading creates maintenance and water quality concerns. For example, flat grades creating safety concerns*

*due to ponding and inadequate collection deteriorates sidewalks, adding maintenance responsibility, and degrades water quality.*

- **Mobility**; *the existing pavement width of 24' is creating conflicts between cars, bicyclists and pedestrians because it is not wide enough to accommodate the demand for multiple modes of transportation in this corridor. NH Route 28 is a priority identified within the regional and Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plans. The bicyclist stress and pedestrian conflicts were identified at the Corridor Study Public Information Meetings.*
- **Safety**; *the existing condition levels of service and accessibility at intersections is poor. The safety concerns include speed through the corridor, as well as pedestrian conflicts at intersections and uncontrolled crossings concerns raised during the Corridor Study Public Information Meetings.*

- b. D. Ford noted the P&N incorporates the goals and vision well, and asked if additional resources should be included in the P&N. R. Martin explained the resources are required to evaluate through the NEPA process and not typically written into the P&N to justify the project improvement.

VI. Alternative Considerations & Rating Criteria – J. Ayotte shared different versions of project rating criteria, how rating criteria serves as a tool to build consensus of the selected alternative, and identified sample considerations for alternative to be compared to. In addition to Transportation Modes, Intersection Capacity & Operations, Property Impacts, Historic & Cultural Landmarks, Right-of-Way Requirements, Stormwater & Water Quality, Speed & Traffic Calming, Lighting & Utilities, Operation & Maintenance, Parking/Loading Areas, Pedestrian Crossings & Visibility, and Costs the PAC identified -

- a. D. Ford noted Safety, Cost, & Water Quality are key considerations for the project.
- b. L. Murray noted maintaining a village feel are important.
- c. M. DeVries added that differentiation between commercial and residential properties is important, specifically to review the impact to businesses.

VII. Next Steps & Alternatives – Lastly, in preparation for the next PAC meeting, members shared their thoughts on different alternatives

- a. Typical Sections – L. Murray noted the Steering Committee created the different cross sections and it would be beneficial to review together. The design team has started creating cross sections, and D. Ford added the Town wanted to assist with a tree inventory to understand, which trees should be preserved.
- b. Pickering Corner – B. Tougher explained the Steering Committee spent considerable energy reviewing designs, impacts, and concerns at Pickering Corner. J. Ayotte explained the alternatives are consistent with the Steering Committee's recommendations and the design team is planning to utilize the effort completed by the Town. D. Ford shared with the PAC, the design team has investigated compact roundabout concepts, which is a smaller roundabout diameter and could minimize impacts to Brewster and its structures.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. NHDOT will revise the PAC #1 Meeting Notes, post PAC #2 presentation materials and minutes from this meeting on the NHDOT project website.
2. Town of Wolfeboro and consultant will contact BOT and review uncontrolled crossing yielding study. (*D. Ford corresponded with M. O'Donnell on July 14<sup>th</sup> to initiate study.*)
3. The next PAC Meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2021 at 2:00pm.
4. PAC members will review Purpose & Need Statement and provide comments in advance to Tavis Austin and Jason Ayotte.

Submitted by:

NHDOT

JMA/jma

NOTED BY:

cc: Attendees, File

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