

Public Advisory Committee Meeting #6

Project/File: US Route 1 - 29640
Date/Time: February 15, 2024 / 4:00 PM
Location: Portsmouth Department of Public Works
Next Meeting: February 29, 2024 (PAC #6)
Attendees: David Smith – NHDOT
Curtis Morrill – NHDOT
David McNamara – Stantec
Tyler Gagnon – Stantec
Eric Eby – Portsmouth Department of Public Work (DPW)
David Walker – Rockingham Planning Commission
Joanna Kelley – Assistant Mayor
Jillian Harris – Portsmouth Planning & Sustainability Department
Ben VanCamp – The Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth
Andrew Bagley – Parking and Traffic Safety Committee
Matthew Glenn – Seacoast Association of Bike Riders (SABR)
Jonathan Samberg – Seacoast Association of Bike Riders (SABR)
William McQuillen – Portsmouth Fire Department

Absentees: Kathleen Corliss – NHDOT
Mark Newport – Portsmouth Police Department
Peter Britz – Portsmouth Planning & Sustainability Department
Barbara McMillan – Conservation Commission
Rad Nichols – Cooperative Alliance of Seacoast Transportation (COAST)
Brenna Jennings – Corridor Resident
Sharon Nichols – Corridor Resident
Janet Stevens – Executive Council
Senator Rebecca Perkins Kwoka
Rep. Rebecca McBeath
Rep. Gerald Ward
Rep. Kate Murray
Rep. Joan Hamblet
Rep. David Meuse
Rep. Ned Reynolds

Distribution: Attendees

A fifth Public Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting was held at Portsmouth Department of Public Works on February 15th, 2024 for the Portsmouth Route 1 project. This was the first PAC meeting held for the project since December 2020 – since this time, there is a new design team in place and the PAC has many new members that need to be introduced the project for the first time. The goal of the meeting was to give a brief

history of the project, summarize where the project previously left off, and reintroduce the previously preferred alternative with the hopes of gaining the consensus of the PAC prior to presenting at a future Public Informational Meeting (PIM).

Presentation – Introduction:

D. Smith began the meeting with introductions, a summary of the project's extensive history, an explanation of the what the goals are for the PAC, and stated the meeting's agenda. He mentioned that the meeting would include a lot of information to digest and that there would be a follow-up meeting held on February 29th, 2024 to discuss to key points.

D. McNamara presented the project background and limits, existing corridor data, and the project's purpose and need. He then opened it up to discussion/questions.

Discussion – Introduction:

No questions/comments.

Presentation – Roadway:

D. McNamara then presented the existing and projected traffic data for the existing roadway conditions. He then went into the proposed roadway corridor alternatives – he went through the history of each of the alternatives, explaining that the PAC had previously preferred Alternative 3. He then showed some critical sections along the corridor to show potential property impacts and key pinch-points. Lastly, he briefly introduced roundabout alternatives for the Walmart and Springbrook Cir. Intersections with Route 1.

Discussion – Roadway:

- Ben VanCamp (Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth) asked how the traffic volume at the Walmart and Springbrook Cir. Intersections compare to the newly constructed roundabout in Dover, NH.
 - D. McNamara was not sure what the exact numbers were, but noted they will look those up and have them for the next meeting.
- Matthew Glenn (SABR) commented on the bike/ped. crossings at the same Dover, NH roundabout, stating he believes that it is currently unsafe. He believes drivers of this roundabout often miss/ignore the HAWK system at the WB departure, and do not yield to pedestrians.
 - D. McNamara stated that Stantec will look into operations at this location in more detail.
- Eric Eby (Portsmouth DPW) asked if the recent changes to the Lang Rd. intersection have been incorporated into the updated traffic analysis.
 - D. McNamara confirmed that the Lang Road changes were incorporated into the updated traffic analysis.
- Assistant Mayor Joanna Kelley asked if the future developments in the area are included in the projected traffic volumes.
 - D. McNamara stated that they were considered when developing the proposed growth rate.

- B. VanCamp asked where the design team got the 1% growth value from – and if that is a standard number to use in traffic analysis.
 - David Walker (Rockingham Planning Commission) stated that the 1% value is typical and was used on previous studies for this corridor, but believes that it may be too large. Historic data along this corridor has shown limited growth since that last study.
- J. Kelley asked why Alternative 4 (roundabouts) was not included in the comparison tables for roadway typical sections being considered.
 - D. McNamara stated that Alternative 4 is a standalone intersection concept that could be included in any of the other three typical section alternatives.
- D. Walker stated that Alternative 1 is ‘very old’ and when it was originally conceptualized, it ignored any potential impacts it would have along the corridor. He also stated that design goals have changed since then and he would not have included this type of alternative if it was something he was involved in currently.
- Andrew Bagley (Parking and Traffic Safety Committee) asked about City funding contributions.
 - D. Smith stated that there is a 80/20, federal/state split.
 - D. McNamara stated that in previous PAC meetings there was discussions about City fundings through grants for sidewalk/path construction.
- A. Bagley pointed out that if all roadway alternatives would require a full-depth reconstruction, would the roundabout costs be much different than any other alternative.
 - D. Smith stated that there is usually a 15-20% cost increase when comparing a roundabout to a signalized intersection.
 - A. Bagley stated that as much as he likes the roundabouts, he would hate to progress it as a preferred alternative, show the public, then have to cut it from the project based on cost.
- J. Kelley asked the design team if they are seeing an increase in roundabouts being constructed throughout the State, or do they usually end up cut during alternative analysis. She also asked if there are any local (seacoast) roundabouts that she and others could drive through.
 - D. McNamara discussed the evolution of modern roundabouts.
 - D. Smith noted roundabouts are being built across the State and are gaining increased support from the public. brought up Keene, NH and how that city really likes roundabouts and has constructed them throughout. A good example of a city buying into it and the locals have realized the overall pros as compared to other types of intersections. Local examples are at the US 4/Boston Harbor Road intersection in Dover and Foye’s Corner in Rye.
- J. Kelley asked if the roundabout alternatives would impact driveway access to any businesses.
 - Between the two proposed roundabouts, there are two driveways (Clark Associates and Salvation Army) and Constitution Avenue, all of which would need to be “right-in and right-out” accesses with ability to reverse direction if desired at the roundabouts which are 400’

away from the parcel drives and 900' away from Salvation Army. The roundabouts would provide for safer accessibility to US 1.

- J. Kelley asked if the roundabout alternatives would potentially help alleviate the traffic issues associated with Water Country. She also questioned what would happen when the traffic backs all the way up through the Springbrook Cir. roundabout – would the whole intersection fail in all directions.
 - D. McNamara responded that the roundabout won't fix that issue. Similar to a traffic signal, if drivers enter the roundabout but are blocked from exiting, it will back up the other approaches.
- E. Eby asked if the design team has or could create video simulations for the roundabout alternatives and bring them to the next PAC meeting.
 - D. McNamara noted that simulations have been developed, however need to be reviewed to ensure that the traffic volumes are accurate given the timeframe since their initial development and that they would be shared with the PAC at the next meeting.

Presentation – Bike/Peds:

D. McNamara continued the presentation by discussing the current bicycle and pedestrian alternatives. He explained that based on previous PAC meetings and discussions with the NHDOT Active Transportation group, the design team is currently showing a 5-FT shoulder and multi-use sidepath on both sides of the roadway, with the shoulder striped as a bike lane. He also showed two intersection crossing alternatives, bike boxes and 2-stage green.

Discussion – Bike/Peds:

- A. Bagley asked if the buffer between the sidepath and sidewalk would be painted or a different material.
 - D. McNamara explained that at this point of the design, that has not been decided, but he showed example photos of each.
- B. VanCamp stated that including the utility and signage buffer along the curb line, separating the bike/peds from vehicular traffic would be a nice safety benefit.
- M. Glenn stated that he has never seen two bike-lanes running parallel to each other on the same side of the roadway before. He asked if the design team had any examples.
 - D. McNamara stated that the labeling of the shoulder may be more of a semantics discussion. The shoulder is being striped as a bike lane to let experienced bikes know they aren't forced to use the sidepath.
 - Another SABR member stated that going forward it would probably be better to just remove the bike symbols from the shoulders.
- M. Glenn stated that bicyclists are not going to be riding along Route 1 for 'fun'. He said he would much rather see a 2-FT shoulder and a multi-directional shared-use path on both sides of the roadway.

- M. Glenn also stated that there are safer crossing angles for bikes/peds at the intersections.
- M. Glenn stated that bicyclists are not currently using the bike boxes as designed in other parts of the City and would prefer not to see more of them.
 - E. Eby agreed with the statement – adding that he uses the intersections similar to how a user would use a 2-stage green.
- D. Smith stated that he believes it may be beneficial to have a stand-alone bicycle/pedestrian focused meeting to discuss the layouts at intersections and that a meeting focused on the bike/ped discussion will be setup.
- Members of SABR stated that overall, bicyclists do not like to use in-road buffered bike lanes.
- M. Glenn asked that the multi-use path be offset from the curb line as far as possible along the length of the corridor, even if that value is inconsistent.
 - A maximum of 6' offset can be considered and discussed with the PAC and public.
- M. Glenn asked if there has been any consideration to adding a mid-block crossing somewhere near Campus Dr. or Hoover Dr.
 - D. McNamara said that there has been discussion about adding a mid-block crossing. He noted the Campus Drive intersection does not meet signal warrants, so it would need to be installed as a mid-block crossing. The discussion confirmed there is a desire for a crossing in this location. Stantec will look at options and incorporate those into the next meeting.
- A. Bagley asked is there any plan on snow removal along the multi-use paths, since they are wider than a standard sidewalk.
 - C. Morrill stated that it is the City's responsibility and part of the maintenance agreement between the City and State. If the City declines to accept the maintenance responsibility, they will not be built.

Presentation – Miscellaneous Topics:

D. McNamara went on to discuss a few other miscellaneous topics including stormwater controls, transit, NEPA, and survey reestablishment along the corridor.

D. Smith then restated, that the goal of this meeting was to refresh the PAC with the design to allow for coordination locally and that the design team would like to hear insight, support or not regarding the project components at the follow-up meeting on 02/29.

Discussion – Miscellaneous Topics:

- Jillian Harris (Portsmouth Planning & Sustainability Department) would like to know who should attend the bike/ped focused meeting and when it should be held.
 - D. Smith stated that the meeting would be setup prior to the PIM and open to any who had interest to attend.

- M. Glenn stated that overall, he is happy with the progress that has been made. He also mentioned that he has safety concerns with the number of driveways along the corridor and wonders if there is an opportunity to narrow any of these as part of the project. He also questioned if the City/State has the ability to tell businesses that currently have access to side streets, to only use that access and limit traffic from Route 1.
 - D. Smith stated that there are State regulations when it comes to driveway widths and locations and that all abutting properties have driveway permits. He stated that the design team would review the permits and all access points will be examined.
 - D. Smith also pointed out that some drives may need to be closed as part of the design.
- E. Eby asked if all of the alternatives have similar ROW impacts.

Presentation – Schedule:

D. Smith concluded the meeting discussing the upcoming project schedule and what the immediate next steps should be.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate record of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact the writer immediately.

Thank you,

STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC.

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Attachment: [Attachment]

MEETING ATTENDANCE - PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #5

PROJECT
MEETING LOCATION
DATE

PORTSMOUTH 29640 - US ROUTE 1 IMPROVEMENTS
PORTSMOUTH DPW - TRAINING ROOM
2/15/2024

2/15 Attendance	Role	Suffix	First	Last	Title	Board
✓	City of Portsmouth	Ms.	Joanna	Kelley	Assistant Mayor	City of Portsmouth
	Portsmouth Police Department	Mr.	Mark	Newport	Chief of Police	Portsmouth Police Department
<i>Wjm</i>	Portsmouth Fire Department	Mr.	William	McQuillen	Fire Chief	Portsmouth Fire Department
<i>gkhan</i>	Portsmouth Planning Department	Ms.	Peter	Britz	Planning Director	Portsmouth Planning & Sustainability Department
	Conservation Commission	Ms.	Barbara	McMillan	Co-Chair	Conservation Commission
✓	Portsmouth Department of Public Works	Mr.	Eric	Eby	Parking and Transportation Engineer	Portsmouth Department of Public Works
✓	Parking and Traffic Safety Committee	Mr.	Andrew	Bagley	Councilor	Parking and Traffic Safety Committee
✓	The Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth		Ben	VanCamp	President	
	Portsmouth Historical Society - Portsmouth Advocates					
✓	COAST (Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation)	Mr.	Rad	Nichols		
	Rockingham Planning Commission	Mr.	David	Walker	Assistant Director	Rockingham Planning Commission
	Resident (1) - Elwyn Park	Ms.	Brenna	Jennings		
	Resident (2) - The Cedars	Ms.	Sharon	Nichols		
	Executive Councilor	Ms.	Janet	Stevens		Executive Council
	Senate District 21	Senator	Rebecca	Perkins Kwoka		Senate District 21
	District 27 (Portsmouth Ward 3)	Rep.	Rebecca	McBeath		District 28 (Portsmouth Ward 2)
	District 28 (Portsmouth Ward 4)	Rep.	Gerald	Ward		District 27 (Portsmouth Ward 4)
	District 22 (Portsmouth Ward 5)	Rep.	Kate	Murray		District 22 (Portsmouth Ward 5)
	District 26 (Portsmouth Ward 3)	Rep.	Joan	Hamblet		District 26 (Portsmouth Ward 3)
	District 37 (Portsmouth Ward 1,5)	Rep.	David	Meuse		District 37 (Portsmouth Ward 1,5)
	District 39 (Portsmouth Ward 2,3,4)	Rep.	Ned	Raynolds		District 39 (Portsmouth Ward 2,3,4)
						SABR
	<i>Seacoast Area Bicycle Riders</i>	<i>Mr.</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Gleason</i>		<i>SABA</i>

