



Meeting Notes

Place: Hampton Falls Town Hall

Date: September 16, 2021

Notes Taken by: P. Blum

Project #: 52575.07

Re: Hampton Falls Corridor Study #29610
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #3

Advisory Committee Attendees:

Shawn Hanson, Planning Board	Keith Webster, Dodge's Agway	Marty Kennedy, VHB
Beverly Mutrie, Heritage Commission	Dave Walker, RPC	Philip Blum, VHB
Greg Parish, School Board	Tobey Reynolds, NHDOT	

Non-Advisory Committee Attendees:

Lou Gargiulo	Phil Chura	Susan Porcelli
Kathryn Diggle	Jay Lord	Priscilla Lord
William Diggle		

Mr. Kennedy opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the third Advisory Committee meeting for the Hampton Falls Corridor Study. Mr. Kennedy proceeded to review the agenda for the meeting including:

- What we heard at the public workshop
- RPC's public input survey
- Board of Selectmen 8/18/21 Letter
- Review conceptual alternatives
- Review benefits and impacts
- Next steps

Mr. Kennedy reviewed of the survey results from the Public Workshop along with feedback received on the RPC's public input on-line tool. It was noted that among Hampton Falls residents, efforts to reduce travel demand along Route 1 received substantially more support than alternatives that involved the widening of Route 1 (4-lane or 5-lane cross section). Residents from other communities, however, expressed support for the Route 1 widening alternatives. Mr. Kennedy noted that these findings confirm the study's challenge in that the problem (vehicle queuing on Route 1) is experienced mostly by motorists from outside Hampton Falls, while the potential solutions impact the community of Hampton Falls.

Next Mr. Kennedy noted that the NHDOT received a letter from the Hampton Falls Board of Selectmen indicating that the Town was opposed to any alternative that impacted the Town Common. In part the letter stated *"We recognize and thank you for these efforts, however, the Board of Selectmen, on behalf of the Town of Hampton Falls, is opposed to any proposed change(s) to the Town Common or change that would affect the Town Common in any way. It is strongly felt that any change to the Town Common would devalue the aesthetics of the Common and threaten one of the sacred*

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treasures of Hampton Falls." The letter did request that the NHDOT consider actions to enhance the efficiency of the two traffic signals.

Mr. Kennedy proceeded to show and describe the Route 1 widening alternatives. The 5-lane alternative provided an additional through lane in each direction while a 4-lane alternative provided an additional through lane in the northbound direction only. It was explained that the 5-lane alternative would substantially address the queuing problem, but the required widening would impact the Town Common. The edge of pavement would be approximately 17 feet closer to the Common. The 4-lane alternative would partially address the queuing problem (northbound only) and although the impact to the Common would be less (the edge of the pavement would be approximately 5 feet closer to the Common), the widening could still be viewed as impacting the Common.

Additionally, both the 5-lane and the 4-lane alternatives would result in Route 1 being widened to the east by approximately 8 feet. The widening would necessitate the relocation of the existing utility lines and the removal or relocation of commercial business signage, vegetation, etc.

The discussion then moved to alternatives that considered closing the Route 1/Exeter Road intersection and converting Lincoln Avenue to 2-way flow. These alternatives considered the previously discussed widening options for Route 1 (5-lane or 4-lane) and options for traffic control at the Route 1/Lincoln Avenue intersection including traffic signal control or a roundabout. These alternatives, which in addition to any impact associated with the widening of Route 1, would require the widening of Lincoln Avenue, which could impact the Common and the line of mature trees along Lincoln Avenue. It was noted, however, that with the closure of Exeter Road, the Town Common could potentially be expanded to the south.

After some discussion, the Committee concluded that each of the widening alternatives, including the roundabout, would potentially impact the Common and therefore the Town would not support any of the widening alternatives and that the No Build option was preferred.

Lastly, the Committee discussed the next steps and agreed that no additional Committee meetings would be needed, but a final public meeting should be held to present the study findings. VHB will prepare a draft summary report and present the study findings at a final public meeting.

The following are a representative sampling of comments and questions expressed by attendees during and after the presentation:

- Did VHB consider closing Lincoln Avenue and making Exeter Road the primary access point from the West?
RESPONSE: The purpose of closing either Lincoln Avenue or Exeter Road is to eliminate one of the traffic signals. Eliminating the signal at Lincoln Avenue would make it very difficult for motorists to enter and exit Depot Road.
- How far North would the widening from the signalized intersections need to go? RESPONSE: This is something that would be designed for at a later design stage.
- Interest was expressed in a regional study to look at traffic throughout Route 1 and to identify opportunities to try and divert more traffic off Route 1.

- Question was asked about implementing a flashing yellow arrow at the Lincoln Avenue/Depot Road signal. RESPONSE: A flashing yellow arrow could be implemented at this signal, but the concern is that there wouldn't be sufficient gaps for a left turning vehicle to take advantage of this due to the high through volume traveling southbound.
- Concern was expressed about continued development in the Town of Seabrook affecting traffic in Hampton Falls.
- Interest was expressed in the idea of constructing a new 4-lane roadway that would bypass Hampton Falls.
- Interest was expressed in potentially installing more dynamic travel time message signs on I-95 to discourage travelers of exiting and using Route 1.
- How was the through traffic on Route 1 determined? RESPONSE: Turning movement counts were conducted in August 2020. A COVID adjustment factor was applied to increase the counts to pre-pandemic levels.
- Interest was expressed in removing the toll on I-95 to encourage more vehicles to travel on the interstate.
- Interest was expressed in providing some guidance or recommendations within the study report for the Planning Board relating to access management of future development proposals.