

Route 10 Steering Committee Meeting #11
Simsbury Town Hall, Main Meeting Room
Minutes of June 27, 2011 – 5:00 PM to 7PM

| ATTENDEES: | <u>Name</u> | <u>Company*</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|--|
| | Mary Glassman | First Selectman – Town of Simsbury |
| | Jim Gallagher | Zoning |
| | Margery Winters | CC IW – SC |
| | Emil Dahlquist | Design Review Board – SC |
| | Rick Wagner | Representing local business in corridor – SC |
| | John Hampton | Deputy First Selectman - SC |
| | Ted DeSantos | F&O |
| | Nancy Haase | Board of Selectmen - SC |
| | Kirsten Griebel | Resident – SC |
| | Steven Antonio | Representing local business in corridor – SC |
| | Mark Deming | Economic Development Commission – SC |
| | Emily Moos | CRCOG – PT |
| | Judy Rabinowitz | Member of the Public |
| | Harald Bender | Member of the Public |
| | Stephanie Riefe | Simsbury.patch.com |
| | Tom Evans | Member of the Public |
| | Sarah Nielsen | Member of the Public |

* SC = Steering Committee

PT = Project Team

Welcome and Business

Mary Glassman welcomed meeting attendees.

Public Comment

Emily Moos handed out a comment from Steve Antonio. She explained that this comment outlines opposition to the Wolcott Road extension.

Mr. Antonio, sitting in for Rick Wagner on the Steering Committee, stated that he would defer his comment to the letter that he wrote, but that he generally has questions about the necessity of the Wolcott Street extension as a short term recommendation.

Ms. Glassman asked Ms. Moos to detail where this is in the draft report. Ms. Moos directed everyone to look at recommendation 5A. There is a drawing of the recommendation, and it's in the report on page 70 of the materials she sent on Friday, section 3.4.7 North Gateway.

Mr. Antonio indicated that this is the same road. He doesn't see the benefit, and he saw the papers from the last meeting, and he questions the validity of some of those numbers as far as

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the diversionary traffic and how it would evolve from one area to the other. He stated that he does not see consistency in where the cars are originating, and he questions how many cars are headed northward. He stated that a relief road to the north isn't useful as a majority of the traffic is southbound. He worries that this alternative is diverting traffic from his property to a different property.

Ms. Moos said Ted might be able to address these questions better. She stated that generally average daily traffic is used as a base and future projections are made from that. She stated that the model is good at predicting regional trends once a new connection is made.

Mr. Antonio reiterated that he does not see that the amount of road implied in the recommendation will support what's expected and he doesn't see where those vehicles are originating. He strongly opposes this particular aspect, unless he can be shown otherwise. He also wants to address that where this recommendation intersects with County and Hoskins is already slimly functional, he thinks adding more friction is going to create a traffic problem where none exists currently. They are proposing a light, but he thinks that would cause a residential problem. Will ask Ted to address this when he arrives. A lot of these solutions are not intended to be short-term. Steve feels they are definitely short-term.

Adoption of Minutes

Ms. Moos stated that the June 9th minutes were not available at this time, but that they will be coming shortly. May 18th minutes were moved by Margery Winters and seconded by John Hampton.

Ms. Glassman asked for Questions. A committee member noted that on the second page, last paragraph a formal vote was taken and it was voted unanimously, that should be added. It was also noted that there should be an SC next to one of the members of the Steering Committee.

Ms. Glassman stated that the committee would not approve these minutes until those changes are finalized. The motion and second were withdrawn.

Discussion of Draft Existing Conditions Report, Additional Preliminary Modeling and Draft Improvements Matrix

Mary Glassman noted that there is a Board of Selectman meeting at 7 PM on July 11th and that the goal tonight is to walk through a technical discussion before they get the draft final report. Ms. Glassman thanked those who made comments. At the end of the meeting, they will make the draft report available to the public.

A committee member questioned whether the committee would have time to discuss the draft plan. The committee member feels that new information presented at each meeting gets in the way of committee discussion.

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Ms. Glassman stated that they would and that this is the first opportunity that the committee has had to discuss a draft final report. She stated that that is what they will be working through tonight.

Ms. Glassman want to make sure that everyone is okay with the town making the final draft to be available on the website and called for a motion to make the draft report available to the public after this evening's meeting.

Ms. Moos stated that there will be time for more comments by the committee while the team works through the public comment process. A motion was made by Jim Gallagher and seconded by Kirsten Griebel. The motion carried unanimously.

Since this is the first time they have had the draft report, Ms. Glassman asked if Ms. Moos could walk through it.

Ms. Moos stated that she could do that with once the consultant arrives and wanted to make sure everyone has a complete set of the documents. One of the simplest things to do would be to link it to the CRCOG website. CRCOG will also leave copies for availability at the Simsbury Town Hall.

Ms. Moos explained that she sent out sections 3.1 through 3.7 on Friday. She stated that Sections 1 and 2 are current from the last meeting and that although they did receive comments, they have not been incorporated yet. This is still a work in progress.

Ms. Moos asked Ted DeSantos to go over what everyone is reviewing getting tonight. She asked if Mr. DeSantos would go through the report, and said she could walk through the changes to the matrix.

Mr. DeSantos stated that thus far the committee has seen Chapters 1 and 2, but not the Executive Summary which is still a work in progress. Tonight Chapter 3 has been released which contains the report recommendations. He stated that the team has been working to incorporate the updates from the committee meetings. He stated that the team tried to organize the text of the document around the final evaluations matrix. The way the evaluations matrix presents the information is general and overall recommendations first, then regional connectivity, then local parallel capacity and connectivity, then intersection recommendations, then bike, pedestrian and transit improvements. Mr. DeSantos walked through the report. Mr. DeSantos stated that the team followed the instruction of the committee by taking some of the recommendations out of the body of the report and placing them into the appendix

A question was asked about clarifying which recommendations made it into the appendix and which recommendations did not. Ms. Moos stated that the best place to go to find this out is the recommendations matrix.

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A Committee member questioned whether it makes sense to add a key to the traffic analysis graphic on page 48. Mr. DeSantos stated that a key exists in the existing conditions section and the team will copy it over to this section.

After going through the draft report, Ms. Moos recommended working out some of the comments and suggestions for another week and then posting the report for the public the first week of July.

A committee member had a question regarding posting the report for public comment and whether this pertains to a specific regulation.

Ms. Moos stated that the sometime the Board of Selectmen will vote to make these reports available and a typical public comment period is 30 days. Ms. Moos stated that CRCOG can meet with the committee again in the interim. She stated that to stay on schedule and wrap up the process by September, this past Friday was when they were hoping to release it, but they need one more week to see the final document.

A committee member suggested releasing the report on July 5th but not starting the 30 days until after the committee has had a chance to review it.

The committee began to discuss whether members had availability for meeting the week of July 5th. It was determined that Wednesday or Thursday the week of July 5th would be the best date to meet and that Ms. Moos should send out a notice to see if there would be a quorum.

Ms. Moos began going through the Recommendations Matrix to outline revisions that had been made. She stated that the team tried to incorporate some of the comments they heard at the last meeting. She stated that the team eliminated the column that states recommendations are consistent with the POCD as they decided they could handle that better in text. Some changes were made to the symbology under environmental impact and a change has been made to the definition of environmental impact.

A committee member stated that viewing a positive environmental impact as an alternative that addresses carbon emissions through encouraging biking, walking and transit actually makes it harder to determine what is truly of positive environmental benefit.

A committee member suggested moving the scenic vistas language into the character section.

Ms. Moos stated that the definitions were changed from questions into statements. She also stated that according to the committee's directions, symbols were counted and recommendations with a higher number of symbols were placed at the top and ordered them that way.

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A committee member stated that the team had mentioned that they were going to remove a car symbol if there was less than 1% change in traffic congestion. Could that go into the definition? They've been talking a lot about roadway improvements, the green one is bike/pedestrian and other greenway improvements.

A committee member mentioned that the recommendation 1A still is incorrect. Lincoln Lane should be changed to Blue Ridge.

A committee member commented that some of the items in the key should actually be reflected in the body of the matrix (e.g. \$ signs should be actual dollar amounts and phasing symbols should actually be years).

Ms. Moos stated that other than the comments from Emil Dahlquist on the matrix, there were no other comments forwarded to the team.

A committee member stated that the matrix is one of the most important things and that the committee should spend time reviewing this now.

The committee began a review of the matrix recommendations row by row starting in the Town center with off-corridor connectivity, operations for regional and parallel connections.

The major suggestions made were to change some of the phasing designations and to highlight in the notes section which recommendations are also supported by the findings of the Town Center Charrette.

A committee member asked if the environmental impact symbols could be taken out where they refer to positive impact due to reducing carbon emissions. Ms. Moos stated that this will be taken care of.

There was also a question and comment relating to the concept of elongating the town center area by implementing the Iron Horse Road extension recommendation.

A comment was made regarding the Slip Road Connection from RT 185 connection to RT 10 as encouraging economic development. Ms. Glassman stated that it would be good to reflect some of the public comments made on this recommendation in the notes section of the matrix.

A committee member asked whether this plan is still looking at re-designating RT 315 to Wolcott Rd. and whether Rich Sawitzke had stated that there was something new that could be done in this location.

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Ms. Moos stated that discussions with DOT indicated that's not likely to happen. She stated that Rich Sawitzke had talked about possible signage for no through trucks.

Ms. Moos asked Mr. DeSantos to address Steve Antonio's comments on recommendation 5B. Mr. DeSantos stated that this recommendation has been in place since 1998 and that it's been endorsed by ConnDOT and the charrette, it's important because of the approved developments, as well as the regional connection over to Wolcott Road, RT 189, etc. That single regional route is important for connectivity.

Mr. Antonio stated that this plan overlooks the North Gateway in terms of urban design solutions. He stated that Weatogue is getting a beautiful town green and he sees this regional connection in the north gateway as a diversionary road.

Mr. DeSantos stated that the recommendation is not intended to be diversionary. He stated that the North gateway holds the largest potential for land use development in the corridor in terms of developable land. He stated that the parallel roadway is critical to maintaining a two lane RT 10 in the North gateway which was a key guiding principle of the study supported by the community. He stated that this recommendation does not take away from traffic that is destination oriented.

Mr. Antonio stated that he can't agree 100%. A number of guests in our establishment stop by on the way back from the airport, if you take that out of the equation, they won't go out of the way to visit us. There are negative ramifications. He also stated that he has problems with the recommendation being a short term recommendation and questioned it being a public/private partnership?

Mr. DeSantos stated that there is a significant amount of residential growth approved in the North gateway already in the form of the Meadowood development. It will take a significant amount of coordination to determine when this roadway would be most appropriate. One concept talked about by the town and the property owners is to work on developing it in phases.

Mr. Antonio stated that the recommendation might be best categorized as "As Opportunity Arises" He also stated that he is trying to understand how the team came up with this projection. It does show 200 cars being rerouted.

Mr. DeSantos stated that the Regional model is the best tool available to determine future volume and it takes into consideration travel time, traffic characteristics.

Mr. Antonio stated that his gut instinct is that the vast majority of traffic goes south in this section of RT 10 and he can't understand the projections which make it look like people would go north to go south. I'm talking between Hoskins and 315.

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Mr. DeSantos stated that the percentage change is reflecting the buildout condition both with roadway changes and without. He stated that the model shows a substantial benefit to reducing traffic to 25-50% lower than it would be without those connections.

Mr. Antonio stated that he feels that the way traffic currently flows, the right solution – even though it would be detrimental to his business - would be to run the road behind Hoskins Crossing. He stated that he would agree to disagree with the alternative being presented.

Next Steps

Mary Glassman stated that the team would check into availability to meet next week as previously stated. She asked committee members with comments to send them to Emily Moos.

The meeting adjourned at 7PM.