

Route 10 Steering Committee Meeting #7
Simsbury Town Hall, Main Meeting Room
Minutes of April 28, 2011 – 7:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company*</u>
Mary Glassman	First Selectman – SC
Ed Pabich	Zoning Commission – SC
Alan Needham	Planning Commission – SC
Nancy Haase	BOS - SC
Rick Wagner	Representing local business in corridor – SC
Mike Fish	Representing local business in corridor – SC
Kirsten Griebel	Resident – SC
Emil Dahlquist	Design Review Board – SC
Margery Winters	CC IW - SC
Tom Evans	Stakeholder, Southern Gateway
Marlene Jung	Resident, Stakeholder Town Center/Weatogue
Julie Meyer	Resident
Sue Benardczyk	Resident
Betty Woollacott	Resident
Evan Woollacott	Resident
Bryan P.	Resident, TVA
John Lucker	Resident, SHARE
Chet Matezak	Resident, TVA
Frank Haviland	Resident, TVA
Emily Moos	CRCOG – PT
Jennifer Carrier	CRCOG – PT
Ted DeSantos	F&O – PT
Jennifer Nelson	F&O – PT
Rich Sawitzke	Town of Simsbury - PT

* SC = Steering Committee
 PT = Project Team

Welcome and Business

Mary Glassman opened the meeting, by welcoming everyone. The objective of this meeting is review the buildout and transportation analysis tool. The meeting was then open to the public for comment.

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1. Chet Matezak, Tariffville Village Association
 - Noted that there has been an increase in traffic on RT 315 and that redesignation is appreciated
 - Noted that there are busy parks adjacent to the street, and that safety is a concern
 - Mentioned that there is a dirt road to Quarry Road and expressed interest in rerouting the existing RT 315 around the parks
2. Rich Sawitzke, Town Engineer
 - Acknowledged merit of Jeff's suggestion and cautioned about the practicalities of shifting roadway and bridge responsibilities to the state. Explained that this would be a high cost project and may require funding assistance.
3. Betty Woollacott, Simsbury Resident
 - Stated that East Weatogue Street is the oldest street in town and that the area is on the National Register of Historic Districts. She stated that she is concerned with impacts of draft improvements on the historic buildings which are all close to the road and have brownstone foundations in many cases.
4. John Lucker – Simsbury Resident
 - Wants to hear opinions of steering committee on draft regional connections and feels that some of these connections will present issues, e.g. the connection of RT 167 to Firetown Road through a golf course and Country Club and connections through private properties
 - Reiterated comments from the public at previous meetings that the RT 10 & 185 intersection is not a problem as it is busy, but not unbearable, for only 10 – 15 minutes in the morning and afternoon.
 - Called for a redraft of the PAD zone as it potentially allows too much development that will harm the existing character of the town.
5. Frank Haviland, Resident
 - Concerned about the draft master plan's implications for pedestrians and cyclists. Stated a desire to consider other modes than the automobile for traveling on RT 10. Concerned about potential speeders on new roads (e.g. Iron Horse Boulevard Extension). Also concerned about process and wonders whether thresholds can be shown in the build out analysis.

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6. Marlene Jung – Resident adjacent to RT 10 & 185 Intersection

- Supports aspects of Weatogue village center improvement plan, but concerned about the one way slip road improvement and feels that it should not be a street for cars, rather for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Weatogue connection to Stratton Brook Road should be pedestrian oriented and provide access to River because of the overall spirit of the area. Concerned about too much pavement and auto activity near wetlands and the River.

7. Sue Benardczyk – Resident

- Feels that PAD zone will promote too much development in town. Wants more options for how to develop corridor and a holistic look at land use.

Adoption of Minutes from March 3, 2011 Meeting

Mary Glassman called for adoption of the March 3rd Meeting Minutes. Mike Fish made a motion and Margery Winters seconded the motion which passed unanimously with abstention by Nancy Haase.

Adoption of Minutes from April 13, 2011 Meeting

Mary Glassman called for adoption of the April 13th Meeting Minutes. Alan Needham made a motion and Kirsten Griebel seconded the motion which passed with one spelling correction on page 3 to “Terry’s Plain”. Mary Glassman abstained.

Modeling Tool Overview (F&O Team)

Emily Moos described the purpose of the meeting which was to present a tool used to understand the impact of future land use on future corridor traffic under current zoning and based on policy recommendations laid out in the POCD. Ms. Moos pointed out the objectives of the meeting posted on the side of the room which were to explain and understand this tool and how it can be used to show the relationship between corridor growth and future traffic volumes as well as how this tool can inform CRCOG’s traffic model to analyze potential regional connections.

Ms. Moos also explained the definition of land use and the difference between land use and land management strategies. She stated that the land use and trip generation tool deals both with land uses discussed in the POCD for each of the four corridor areas (such as residential use, mixed use and commercial use) and with land management strategies such as transit oriented development, smart growth, etc. Ms. Moos stated that the final report for the RT 10 Corridor Study is not designed to specify what land uses should go where in the corridor, nor is

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it designed to change current zoning, rather it is designed to recommend land management strategies and link the concepts of trip generation to existing land use and zoning. She stated that the detailed decisions regarding future land uses and zoning categories are best handled by future discussions with town boards and commissions.

Emil Dahlquist stated that he appreciated the definition of land use, but questioned why we are not introducing form into this study, i.e. the proximity of buildings to the road.

Ms. Moos stated that questions of form are to be addressed in some sense at a higher level in this study through land management recommendations, e.g. transit oriented development. But that detailed recommendations on form are better addressed at the local board and commission level.

Ted began walking the meeting attendees through the three-step spreadsheet. The first step depicted a buildout analysis, which quantified the net land area that might be susceptible to redevelopment, and the amount of redevelopment that could occur based on the guidance in the POCD. As an example, a 50% buildout rate was depicted, which corresponded to approximately 3.5M square feet of new development along the corridor. This amount of development resulted in corridor failure. Then Ted reiterated community concerns regarding the desired character of the Route 10 Corridor (two lanes), and said that the corridor study was meant to seek balance between land use and transportation. The model utilizes a two-lane configuration. Ted also stated that regional development and other properties in town would impact corridor operations, and that the CRCOG regional travel demand model took this into account.

Ted went over the geographic framework for the analysis and described four areas for land use and trip generation analysis, which encompass the entire corridor: North Gateway, Town Center, Weatogue, and South Gateway. Step one of the tool calculates the net potential floor area of new development in each of the four corridor areas based upon the current POCD recommendations and zoning for Simsbury. Steps two and three illustrate the potential mix of uses in each area and the traffic impacts in each corridor area. The transportation impacts were looked at in terms of trips generated (overall volume along corridor areas) and the critical intersections in each area that would "break" first. The "break" point was defined as exceeding Level of Service (LOS) E. Typically, LOS D is used as a breakpoint in transportation engineering studies, but in order to better accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, LOS E was used in Simsbury.

A number of questions were asked regarding the basis of buildout, land use, and transportation assumptions in the model. Mary Glassman suggested that more detailed questions be reserved for a sub-committee meeting of members who are interested in further discussing this topic. Five steering committee members - Emil Dahlquist, Rick Wagner, Kristin Griebel, Alan Needham, and Mike Fish - volunteered to form a subcommittee to explore the model and underlying assumptions further. The meeting date will be determined in the coming weeks.

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Kirsten Griebel asked for clarification on whether the Town Center Code recommended open space set-asides. It was determined that there may be some provisions for open space in the code, but that this fact would require confirmation by looking back at the code language.

Rick Wagner asked about the availability of documentation of the analysis used to determine net potential floor area of new development. Ted DeSantos stated that the team has this information.

Kirsten Griebel asked for clarification on the units used to represent the new potential development. It was stated that acres are used to represent the net usable land area and land use reduction factors and that Columns H-K in step one, which portray potential buildout figures, are represented in square feet.

Emil Dahlquist asked about how the table determines level of intensity of development and stated that the town does not use floor area ratio (FAR) in the POCD.

Jennifer Nelson explained how the FAR numbers were determined for this analysis – this process included making assumptions using average existing building height, lot coverage, etc. in each of the four corridor areas.

Kirsten Griebel requested an explanation of the term mixed use, the trip reduction factors and their relationship to the trip generation analysis and also asked if other scenarios could be run with this tool. Ted DeSantos explained that this tool is designed to be able to run different scenarios and that tonight is about gaining an understanding of how the tool works before using it to explore difference scenarios. Jennifer Nelson explained the term mixed use, which indicates a certain type of development which is often set up in a more walkable, grid-style where each block contains a mix of uses, commercial, residential, etc. Ted DeSantos explained the basis for the trip reduction factors which are largely based on accepted rates by state DOTs and studies done at various examples across the country. He gave an explanation of how each trip reduction strategy works to reduce the trips made in the corridor.

Rick Wagner asked whether the spreadsheet is available for distribution. Emily Moos stated that the Project Team would be happy to run any scenarios requested.

Public Comment:

Frank Haviland, Resident

- Stated his concern about process and wonders whether thresholds can be shown in the build out analysis to determine how much growth the community wants and then determine the traffic improvements needed.

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Julie Meyer, Resident

- Feels that this is an excellent set of information with data that can show the public what impact zoning has on the town
- Jennifer Nelson clarified that the POCD has been used as a benchmark and that FAR accounts for 40% - 60% development which includes assumptions on lot coverage, etc.

Sue Benardczyk, Resident

- Reiterated her concern that if the proper controls are not set in place, the town could see too much future development.
- Emily Moos reiterated that this study would address general land management principles that might inspire conversations on this topic by town boards and commissions.

John Lucker, Resident

- Reiterated his perspective that the town needs to have discussions about the regional connections in this study to avoid careless drafting of zoning regulations

Several committee members then commented on the quality of the explanation given by the project team, and felt that they had a good understanding of how the model worked.

Next Steps:

- Model subcommittee to form and arrange a meeting in May.
- The next Steering Committee Meetings are to be held tentatively second week in May & May 19th.

Mary asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alan Needham made a motion which Margery Winters seconded. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.