

Route 305 Bloomfield Public Open House Meeting Overview

***Bloomfield Senior Center
330 Park Avenue Bloomfield, CT
February 5, 2009; 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM***

Public Attendees - Residents

Shirley Pagarelli
Carol G Boucher
Margaret Liner
Doria Albert
Tom Ptasznik

Public Attendees – Business Owner/Other

Jim Barnard

Committee Members

Jon Colman—Town Council
Thom Hooper—Director of Planning
Al Lefebvre—Former Council Member

Others

Grayson Wright – ConnDOT
Melanie Zimyeski – ConnDOT
Katherine Rattan – ConnDOT
Karen Stewartson – CRCOG



Project Team

Jennifer Carrier - CRCOG
Jeff Parker – CHA
Rod Bascom - CHA
Lia Huang – CRCOG
Casey Hardin- CHA

Meeting Purpose: Second Public Open House to present Route 305 preliminary alternatives and receive feedback.

Welcome & Introductions

Attendees had an opportunity to circulate around the room, reviewing preliminary alternative boards/demonstrations and engage in feedback activities while talking with study team and advisory committee members, prior to the meeting presentation at 6:30PM.

Jennifer Carrier welcomed attendees and gave an overview of the corridor study.

Preliminary Alternatives Presentation

Jeff Parker summarized the input received from the public in the first public meeting then reviewed potential localized improvements and long term alternatives for the study area.

Jennifer Carrier gave an overview of alternatives under consideration for Windsor.

Next Steps

Jennifer Carrier explained the next steps of the project which are to meet with the Town Councils and Planning and Zoning Commissions, fine tune alternatives based on input received, prepare a draft report, hold a final public meeting to present the draft report to the community, and issue a final study report.

Public Comments

The following summarizes comments heard during the meeting.

A resident/business owner who owns property near the intersection of Peters Road and Woodland Avenue questioned the potential impacts of extending Route 305 on the value of the adjacent property and inquired about a

potential timeline for the extension. Jeff Parker responded that impacts are not definitive due to the conceptual nature of the alignment and the potential for the alignment to change during the design process. Additionally, Jeff Parker noted that the extension is considered a long-term improvement and a substantial amount of time would be required to advance the concept from the current planning stages, through design and construction. Other factors, such as funding availability and competition among other improvement priorities in the region, are also undefined at this stage making it difficult to determine a reliable timeline for potential implementation.

A resident noted that although an extension of Route 305 to Tunxis Avenue (Route 189) could reduce truck and traffic impacts on Woodland Avenue to the benefit of those residents, other residents, particularly those of the new Brighton Meadows development and of Castlewood Drive located on the east side of Woodland Avenue, commented that they would be more greatly impacted by the noise and pollution generated along the extension.

Two residents located along the south side of Old Windsor Road between Old Iron Ore Road and Belden Road (near Flyer Row) noted that vehicle speeds are an issue and make it difficult for residents to safely exit their driveways. Roadway curvature near this location also affects sightlines from these driveways.

A committee member asked the project team to breakdown the high expected costs for the at-grade rail crossing. Jeff Parker explained that the extension option with the at-grade crossing included upgrades to the existing roads, new roads and a stream crossing.

One resident asked if all of the recommendations must be implemented or none at all. Jeff Parker and Jennifer Carrier answered that individual improvements may move forward as funding becomes available.

A resident in the vicinity of Castlewood Drive wanted clarification on why improvements need to be made to Route 305; she has not experienced any difficulty accessing I-91. Jennifer Carrier mentioned that the study reviewed future conditions of Route 305 in Windsor and Bloomfield and that the highest traffic is near I-91. Traffic tapers down further west on Route 305 which is why the study does not recommend four lanes on the Bloomfield portion of Route 305. Windsor residents have expressed concern about future traffic in the area. This resident then wanted to know the proper method to voice objection to portions of the study recommendations. Ms. Carrier asked that any concerns be discussed with the project team and further explained that residents on Woodland Avenue have expressed concern about speeding and high truck traffic on that road. The resident understood that these modifications would benefit residents on Woodland Avenue, but was concerned about the implications for her residence. Rod Bascom added that the possible extension is a long term project; there will be several opportunities for the public to express concerns related to this option before it is implemented.

Another resident proposed a new flyover ramp from I-91 to the Day Hill Road area in lieu of widening Route 305. Ms. Carrier responded that the Windsor Advisory Committee did review a new I-91 exit in the Day Hill Road vicinity as well as a new interchange near the existing Pigeon Hill Road. These options were reviewed with ConnDOT. However, due to merging issues, wetland impacts, significantly higher cost, and a more involved process (since it is a change impacting an Interstate Highway), increasing capacity on Route 305 was the more feasible option. Additionally, the State has initiated a study on Exit 38; this may help alleviate traffic concerns in the area.

A resident asked when recommendations might be implemented. Jennifer Carrier stated that the Bloomfield Advisory Committee did support further investigation into the small connection from Peters Road to Tunxis Avenue. After the overall plan is approved, the Town will need to work on funding to advance portions of the study.

One resident raised concern about the offset connection to Tunxis Avenue shown on the grade separated Route 305 extension option. Jeff Parker and Rod Bascom stated that the marked drawings are only in the preliminary stage and confirmed that this connection would be addressed as further details are developed.

A resident was concerned about the land parcel adjacent to Gold's Gym. A new designated left turn lane is proposed for Gold's Gym, but would this also service future land development in the adjacent parcel? Thom Hooper stated that the parcel in question is currently a storage area and that the waterway would make it difficult for vehicles to access both land parcels from this left turn lane.

The meeting concluded at 7:20 PM however some members of the public continued to meet and talk with the Advisory Committee members and Project Team members.