

Capitol Region Council of Governments

241 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106
Route 305 Advisory Committee Meeting
Windsor Town Hall
Wednesday, November 14, 2007
7:00 PM

Committee Members Organization

Tom Lenehan	Town of Windsor Town Engineer
Michael O'Brien	Windsor Planning & Zoning
Jim Martin	Windsor Economic Development
Peter Souza	Town of Windsor Town Manager
Eric Barz	Town of Windsor Town Planner

Others

Jim Burke	Town of Windsor
Grayson Wright	ConnDOT

Project Team

Jennifer Carrier	CRCOG
Emily Moos	CRCOG
Rod Bascom	CHA
Jeff Parker	CHA
Dave Sousa	CHA

Public Attendees

Richard Wassell	Resident
Evan Foreman	Resident
Bradshaw Smith	Resident

Meeting Purpose: Route 305 Corridor Study – First Local Advisory Committee Meeting to discuss committee roles & responsibilities, preliminary existing conditions findings and preliminary corridor visions and goals.

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Overview of Corridor Study Process

Jennifer Carrier of CRCOG led introductions and gave an overview presentation geared toward the advisory committee. The presentation touched upon the scope of work, explained the corridor study components, the purpose of the Route 305 corridor study and the roles and responsibilities of the committees. Jennifer also reviewed the project schedule. Mr. Lenehan asked that the project schedule be condensed and questioned the 15- to 18-month schedule. Jennifer commented that the 15-18 month schedule was based on a start date of August 2007 and that we'd try and condense as much as possible but coordination and meetings in Bloomfield also determined the project schedule.

3. Preliminary Findings Presentation

The project team gave a presentation of the preliminary findings along Route 305 related to transportation and land use. The following summarizes each of the areas discussed and the comments heard:

Existing Transportation Conditions:

Traffic Operations:

The committee expressed concern as to whether vehicles were backing up onto I-91 from the Northbound off ramp, or whether the HOV lane was contributing to long queues at this light. There was also a question as to whether vehicles were able to circulate through the signal within their allotted green time. CHA explained that the HOV lane is probably not a contributing factor to long queue length and that traffic was not at this point backing up onto I-91. They further explained that the sheer volume alone is enough reason for the backups.

The Addison Road intersection operates poorly during the PM peak hour. The committee inquired as to whether this problem is due to large truck traffic and the project team affirmed that this is not the case.

The Committee asked that historical Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes be summarized to determine if any trends exist. This will be done and incorporated into the draft existing conditions report.

The Committee expressed concern related to two local roads and their ability to access Route 305, residents have extreme difficulty making left turns out of Brewster and Sheffield during the peak periods. They also explained that while there is an alternate route (Mountain Road which is signalized) for residents of the Sheffield Road neighborhood, there is no easy alternative for the residents of the Brewster Road neighborhood. Additional traffic counts for these two roadways will be collected and existing intersection operations will be conducted.

The study team will look into traffic signal fire pre-emption and the confusing flashing operation for the traffic signals in the vicinity of I-91.

Corridor Safety:

Based upon current accident data, the corridor was defined as having no major safety concerns stemming from road geometry or design. The committee did express concern over sun glare near Addison Road. The project team stated that remedies can be explored such as visors on signals, etc.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities:

It has been established that the Route 305 Corridor has very few opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists with minimal sidewalks and difficult-to-use pedestrian push buttons at only some intersections.

The committee as well as members of the public in attendance at the meeting voiced the opinion that sidewalks would be a welcome asset along Route 305.

Transit Facilities:

It has been determined that there are very few transit opportunities along the corridor. Transit service is limited to the N6 & N7 lines which only traverse the corridor near the I 91 Interchange. The committee pointed out that employees at some businesses are parking on the lawn near Pigeon Hill Road and that adequate parking facilities are an issue in this area.

The committee mentioned that the Chamber of Commerce sent a survey to major employers in the Day Hill area to inquire about transit. This survey is attributed to the Northwest Corridor Study currently underway. All surveys of employers will be coordinated.

Land Use:

Existing Zoning and Land Use Trends:

Four land units characterize the Route 305 Corridor listed as follows from east to west – Corporate Gateway, Single-Family Residential, Commercial/Industrial and Rural/Undeveloped.

Developers have targeted the interchange area as a key prospect for commercial development. The Committee expressed that residents have continually voiced opposition to more development in this area.

Preserving the residential nature of the corridor was highlighted in discussions. The committee pointed out that one way to maintain livability in the corridor may be to look at enhancing an existing recreational area along the corridor such as Barber Pond.

Integrating the Millbrook wildlife corridor into the corridor should be considered.

Flooding of the Millbrook should be noted and considered when evaluating alternatives.

Visual Assessment: General Characteristics:

The study team has found that the area around I-91 Interchange is visually stark. The Committee expressed that better treatments in the interchange area, such as the replacement of the chain link fencing in the vicinity of the Advo and near Sunoco, should be explored. An alternative to this treatment was mentioned on Mountain Rd. and Bloomfield Ave. where stonework has been employed. The town hopes that this could be a possible model for future corridor design.

Relationship of Land Use & Traffic:

The study team suggested that mitigating future traffic is dependent upon future land uses – mixed uses and more transit oriented developments will relieve current and future congestion.

The Committee also discussed impacts development / redevelopment in Bloomfield may have on Route 305 in Windsor. It was agreed that Bloomfield and Windsor development concepts will need to be coordinated.

3. Public Comments

Members of the public commented on the necessity of this area to remain friendly to the residential character of the corridor. Livability could be improved in the corridor by more pedestrian and bicycle amenities and possibly wider shoulders on the roads. One resident expressed their concern with regard to any widening of the corridor.

4. Establishment of Corridor Vision and Goals

Jeffrey Parker outlined preliminary visions and goals that the Committee may wish to consider. In general the Committee felt any vision should incorporate a multi-modal approach that is coordinated (with both Day Hill Road and development in Bloomfield) and comprehensive while ensuring a safe system where the residential nature of the corridor is preserved and land use and transportation are coordinated. The Committee felt it may be more appropriate if vision and goals were established at the next meeting, after hearing Bloomfield's preliminary comments and reviewing the material in more detail.

5. Next Steps

Jennifer Carrier informed the committee that a similar meeting will take place in Bloomfield in the next few weeks and that a summary of the two meetings would be prepared for both committees to review. The next Windsor Advisory Committee meeting was scheduled for January 9, 2008 at 7 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 9 PM.