

Capitol Region Council of Governments

241 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106

Route 305 Advisory Committee Meeting
Town Council Chambers, Windsor Town Hall
Wednesday, January 9, 2008
7:00 PM

Committee Members

Tom Lenehan
Michael O'Brien
Jim Martin
Peter Souza
Eric Barz

Organization

Town of Windsor Town Engineer
Windsor Planning & Zoning
Windsor Economic Development
Town of Windsor Town Manager
Town of Windsor Town Planner

Others

Jim Burke
Grayson Wright
Melanie Zimyeski
Lauren Good
Bob Dinallo
Emily Moon

Town of Windsor
ConnDOT
ConnDOT – Planning
Town of Windsor Assistant Planner
Town of Windsor Public Works
Town of Windsor

Project Team

Jennifer Carrier
Emily Moos
Rod Bascom
Jeff Parker
Dave Sousa

CRCOG
CRCOG
CHA
CHA
CHA

Public Attendees

Bradshaw Smith
Fred Hesketh
Jim Mason

Resident
Windsor Journal
Resident

Meeting Purpose: Route 305 Corridor Study – Local Advisory Committee workshop to discuss current land use and undeveloped land.

1. Welcome and Progress Update

Jennifer Carrier of CRCOG led introductions and updated the committee on progress since the November 14, 2007 Advisory Committee meeting. The following summarizes Ms. Carrier's update:

- Bloomfield Advisory Committee meeting held November 29, 2007
- Meeting with ConnDOT to discuss potential rail crossing held on December 18, 2007
- Meetings with Bloomfield and Windsor town planners were held to discuss preliminary land use data and future planning
- Major traffic generators in corridor study area were reviewed (map distributed in handouts)
- Resident and commuter surveys were completed and web-based format was closed.
- Team continues to coordinate with town IT departments on project website
- Existing conditions analysis and technical report being completed.

2. Adoption of Minutes (Meeting November 14, 2007)

A motion was made by Mike O'Brien, seconded by James Martin, to accept the minutes of the November 14, 2007 meeting as written. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Future Development Assumptions – Clough Harbour & Associates

David Sousa of CHA presented the preliminary Land Use Build Out Model which included a discussion of analysis zones, future development, the town-sponsored Day Hill Road workshop and coordination with the Town of Bloomfield.

The Committee asked whether desirability of land for development is a factor considered by the model. The Project Team stated that desirability of particular pieces of land is something that can be worked into the matrix.

Tom Maziarz of CRCOG explained a past CRCOG initiative related to probability of development. He mentioned that areas were categorized into a high, medium or low probability of development. This concept was generally liked by the Committee and it will be considered as we move forward.

There are parcels on the zoning map, such as the parcel identified as 283A, which are currently under construction. Select parcels such as this one will have to be adjusted to account for planned development.

Day Hill Road Workshop

Eric Barz made mention of the Day Hill Road workshop to be held on January 22, 2008 in Windsor to discuss recent and future growth and visions for the Day Hill area. The town has experienced extreme grand list growth in the past three to five years and it is in the Town best interest to reexamine this area. Eric stated that this meeting will be to evaluate development strategies, goals and recommendations for an update the Day Hill Road section of the Plan.

Some initial goals that the town has for the Day Hill area are to create mixed-use, workforce housing and services for the expanding workforce in the area. This initiative will also hopefully create a reverse traffic flow in the area and some trip absorption. The town will provide the Project Team new data gathered as a result of the January 22, 2007 meeting. Someone from the project team will attend the meeting.

Traffic Mitigation Strategies

The consultant reviewed various traffic mitigation strategies such as smart growth, Traffic Demand Management (TDM) and enhanced transit systems.

The town mentioned that ING does promote TDM strategies such as staggering work hours and promoting rideshare/carpooling, etc.

A problem discussed at the Town level has been creating a transit loop through the Day Hill area building on existing infrastructure (Windsor Locks, Windsor Station) – conceptually this is a long-range goal.

The Committee posed the question of whether progressive transit improvements will be studied or whether visioning for 2030 is the normal process. Tom Maziarz stated that individual components can be tested on the gross level, but not necessarily for individual turning movements.

The Committee expressed concern and interest in seeing peak hour volumes for this area before and after growth. Tom Maziarz pointed out that CRCOG is not far from having a peak hour traffic model.

The Committee advised that the Project Team sit down with the Town Planner after the Day Hill Road meeting to discuss future uses and adjustments to the preliminary land use matrix.

A concern was raised by the Committee about Pigeon Hill Road and practicing more proactive planning improvements in that area before development creates major traffic problems. This road is a possible alternate route to Addison Road and Marshall Phelps Road. A possible alternative could be to eliminate the exit ramp to Route 305 from Interstate 91 southbound and place one on Pigeon Hill Road instead. The Project Team will keep this idea in mind as future alternatives are discussed. Federal guidelines related to interchange separation will need to be reviewed when evaluating alternative options.

Another concern about Pigeon Hill Road was its current speed and geometry. Tom Maziarz noted that the CRCOG traffic model can simulate speed sensitivity tests on roads. Rod Bascom stated that the next step after a speed sensitivity test would be an engineering study on future road geometry. Jennifer Carrier also stated that the traffic model can generate information on the extent of impacts on surrounding roads when one road is added or taken away. These tools will all be utilized as the Project Team progresses with its analysis.

4. Development of Corridor Vision and Goals (Ongoing)

Jeffrey Parker pointed out the draft outline of preliminary visions and goals for the study noting that this document is a composite of the goals discussed at the first Windsor AC meeting and that this is an ongoing list for continual update and review by the Advisory Committee. Jennifer Carrier took the committee and the public through the draft.

There was question as to whether the goals state the multi-modal aspect of shaping the future corridor. The current list of goals does address this aspect.

A suggestion was made that the word “strive” be replaced with another similar word or removed completely.

Concern was raised on the final Goal on preserving aesthetics and residential character. A rewording was chosen – ‘Preserve and Enhance Corridor Character and Aesthetics’.

5. Public Open House

Jennifer Carrier stated that the time has come to hold the first Public Open House of the study and proposed the second or third week in March as a possible Open House date. Potential dates mentioned were the 12th, 13th, 18th, 19th and 20th. A goal will be to hold the Open House either one day before or after Bloomfield’s Public Open House. The Open House will be interactive with maps for the public to mark up, a traffic simulation at a key intersection in the corridor and a formal presentation at 6:30 PM which will focus on the overall study and existing conditions.

Jennifer Carrier called for suggestions on a location to hold the Public Open House. It was decided that the Town Hall, Town Council Chambers would be the best location. Public outreach will include a newsletter mailing to residential abutters, on-line postings, announcements in town facilities such as the library and local newspapers / television.

Concern over conflicts with UCONN’s March Madness Games was voiced – much of the public will be involved in this event during certain days in March. This will be researched and kept in mind when choosing a date.

6. Public Comments

One member of the public wondered whether the Rt. 305 Corridor Study will enhance the feasibility or attractiveness of the Griffin Line. The Project Team responded that this is not one of the direct goals of the study and that past studies of the Griffin Line did not rate the project as a high priority when compared with other busways within the nation. One way that the project may link with this study is if through developing alternatives for growth there is a clear push toward more residential development in

the Day Hill area. Residential development in the Day Hill area would enhance potential ridership on the Griffin Line. This scenario would also help to justify public investment in the Griffin Line project.

One member of the public questioned whether the potential for mixed use development in the Day Hill area was high or whether this is just a concept at this point. The town responded by stressing the importance of the public conversation on growth in the town which is to start at a meeting on January 22, 2008.

The project team also stressed the importance of looking at growth with regard to Windsor's overall competitiveness within the state of Connecticut. Mixed use housing can attract the 25-35 year old population that Connecticut is rapidly losing to other parts of the country. Windsor could recapture some of that market.

7. Next Steps

Jennifer Carrier informed the committee that the consultant will work on completing a draft technical memorandum on existing conditions. CRCOG will work to schedule a joint steering committee meeting to coordinate analysis of future land use and future development. The Project Team will prepare to hold public open houses (in Bloomfield and Windsor) in March and will begin to analyze future traffic conditions.

Jennifer Carrier called for volunteers to sit on the Joint Steering Committee with members of the Bloomfield Advisory Committee. Mike O'Brien volunteered. Peter Souza stated that either he or Eric Barz would take the other seat on the Joint Committee.

8. Other Business

Jennifer Carrier called for one member of the committee to volunteer for the Committee Chairman position. Jim Martin volunteered for the position and the committee agreed.

The next Windsor Advisory Committee meeting was tentatively scheduled for April 22, 2008 at 7 PM.

9. Adjourn

Jim Martin, Committee Chairman, adjourned the meeting at 8:55 PM.