# Capitol Region Council of Governments

241 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106

**Final Endorsed by Committee on 10/7/08**

**Route 305 Advisory Committee Meeting**
**Town Council Chambers, Windsor Town Hall**
**Wednesday, June 4, 2008**
**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** | |
| Grayson Wright | ConnDOT |
| Melanie Zimyeski | ConnDOT – Planning |
| Tom Maziarz | CRCOG |
| **Project Team** | |
| Jennifer Carrier | CRCOG |
| Emily Moos | CRCOG |
| Rod Bascom | CHA |
| Jeff Parker | CHA |
| **Public Attendees** | |
| John Merrill | Windsor Resident |
| Fred Hesketh | Windsor Journal |
| Allan Ferry | Windsor Resident, Bloomfield Avenue |

***Meeting Purpose:*** Route 305 Corridor Study – Local Advisory Committee meeting to discuss potential future improvement alternatives

**1. Welcome and Progress Update**

Jennifer Carrier led introductions and updated the committee on progress since the January 9, 2008 Advisory Committee meeting. The following summarizes Ms. Carrier's update:

- Steering committee meeting was held on March 7, 2008. In attendance from Windsor were Peter Souza, Mike O'Brien, Eric Barz and Lauren Good and 3 individuals from Bloomfield. This meeting was to discuss critical corridor issues, and the overall build out analysis and vision for the corridor.
- Project Team began brainstorming alternative concepts.
- First public involvement meeting was held in early April. In addition to most of the committee members, approximately 30 individuals attended. Many of the concerns heard were related to traffic circulation and safety along the corridor. Felt the meeting went well and were able to educate individuals on the study process and findings as well as listen to their concerns and comments. One of the hands-on exercises identified that safety and mobility were the top two key goals.

  We held a similar Public Outreach meeting in Bloomfield also in early April where there were 15 individuals present representing residential and business components along the corridor.

  A Committee member asked about Bloomfield's thoughts regarding Route 305 and whether the comments heard in both communities conflicted each other. Jennifer Carrier commented that the comments heard in Bloomfield were very respectful of the residential component of the corridor within Windsor. She further explained that Bloomfield would also like to further evaluate a connection between Route 187 and Route 189.

**2. Adoption of Minutes (Meeting April 3, 2008)**
Jennifer Carrier asked if there were any changes to the minutes or the meeting summary from the public outreach meeting.

A committee member pointed out that the Town Fire Marshall's name is 'Ray' Walker not 'Ron' and that where Captain Street is referred to, the correct name of the street is Capen Street.

A second committee member suggested changing the phrase "shot down" in reference to a redevelopment project on the Tobacco Valley Inn property to "denied."

A motion was made by Mike O'Brien, seconded by Peter Souza, to accept the minutes of the April 3, 2008 meeting as written. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. Future Baseline Conditions Year 2030 and Identification of Critical Areas**
Jeff Parker briefly reviewed the existing corridor findings and presented the future baseline conditions for the year 2030. Critical areas where improvements will be needed were also identified.

A committee member asked for perspective on the intensity of 9% truck traffic on Route 305. Jennifer Carrier stated that nationally the average is approximately 14% for major highways and Interstate 91 is in the 9-12% range however average daily traffic should be a consideration. Ms. Carrier also mentioned that in transportation analysis software 2% is the general default range for heavy vehicles so 2-5% is a good suggested range for similar roadways. The 9% is a bit higher than other similar roads. Concerns regarding sunglare were also reiterated.

**4. BRAINSTORMING**
Jeff Parker introduced the brainstorming section of the meeting. Jennifer Carrier noted that after the brainstorming exercise is complete, the consultants and project team will go through the costs and feasibility of improvements as well as maintain discussions with ConnDOT. Jeff Parker presented traffic, circulation and safety improvements including pedestrian and bicycle improvements as well as traffic calming and gateways. Jennifer Carrier then gave an overview of improvements relating to Day Hill Road and the challenges associated with the Exit 38 Interchange. Options for Pigeon Hill Road and transit were also discussed. The following summarizes the committee's comments on each of these improvement concepts and areas:

**Mountain Road Improvement:**
Improvements for the Mountain Road and Route 305 intersection include a potential signal-protected left-turn in the westbound direction. This could be a short-term improvement and ConnDOT, as a result of this study and comments heard from the public, is currently evaluating ways to accommodate these improvements within the existing right-of-way. One question to consider as this evaluation moves forward - can a westbound advance accomplish the same thing as a protected left turn? The committee would like to see the impacts of different left-turn alternatives once run through the traffic model.

**Brewster Road / Sheffield Road:**
Improvements in the area of Sheffield Road and Brewster Road include potentially providing left turn lanes into side streets in combination with raised or flush medians to calm traffic. Additional alternatives include improving site lines and enhancing neighborhood character. Medians would be located in an effort to avoid blocking private driveways.

Key Comment Summary and Discussion:

- Would a reversible or two way left turn lane work at this location, this option would allow people a place to wait for a turn while through traffic could continue to flow. Fourteen (14) feet is required for a two-way or reversible left turn lane.
- A dedicated left turn lane can be as little as 10' wide.
- Consideration regarding the proximity of any proposed edge of pavement in relation to existing houses will have to be understood. It was confirmed by the committee that residential setbacks in this area are most likely 40 ft.
- Although Mountain Road is sometimes used as an alternative to Brewster and Sheffield, this is not a sustainable alternative as this disrupts the residential character of Mountain Road.
- Windsor is one of the leading towns in the region when it comes to maintaining median infrastructure and landscaping.

- Another alternative could be to align Brewster or Sheffield by realigning one of these two roads. If the newly created intersection were then to meet signal warrants, this could help build public support for a project that would involve taking a few properties.

The committee sees median improvements as a good short term alternative and would like to see more research on a reversible turn lane and possible intersection alignment to improve intersection sight line distances.

**Addison Road:**
Improvements within this intersection could include the provision of an exclusive eastbound left turn lane. The taper from two lanes to one lane east of the intersection is standard however the culvert further east presents an obstacle to future improvements. If the culvert does not need replacement for capacity improvements, it could present obstacles to any road widening improvements.

**Marshall Phelps Road:**
Improvements within this intersection could include the provision of channelized right turn lanes (providing pedestrian refuge and green within the intersection) or consideration of a roundabout to create a gateway and assist with the long left turn queues southbound and eastbound.

Key Comment Summary and Discussion:

- Improvement alternatives must be viewed as a whole and adding a roundabout or more traffic calming elements at this intersection may exacerbate problems on Route 305 associated with traffic volume. Concepts should ensure safety and mobility are not compromised.
- Consideration must be given to the large amount of trucks that utilize this intersection and Marshall Phelps Road.
- The project team can look further into roundabout guidelines, ensuring that a single lane roundabout can handle the volumes at this intersection. If a roundabout is a consideration at this intersection it would be designed to handle large vehicles. A diameter of at least 140' should be considered to accommodate large vehicles such as trucks
- The concept of creating a 'gateway' at this intersection by introducing a roundabout may warrant further investigation.

The Committee would like the Project Team to evaluate a roundabout at this location.

**Other Potential Opportunities:**
Other opportunities to provide safety improvements are scattered throughout the corridor particularly with regard to pedestrian crosswalks and re-striping lanes and shoulders. Providing landscaping and gateways both in the interchange area and at the Bloomfield town line is also an alternative.

Key Comment Summary and Discussion:

- Providing crosswalks in the Interstate 91 interchange area may cause confusion and present further delays for cars exiting and entering the highway. The public did not seem to advocate for pedestrian accommodations in the interchange area, but rather in the more residential portion of the corridor. The interchange area does have existing pedestrian pushbuttons and sidewalks which do signal the presence of pedestrians in the area. Minimal improvements such as pedestrian striping might be a good alternative to more elaborate stamped concrete crosswalks in this area. Striping provides at least a visual cue to motorists that pedestrians are allowed in the roadway in a particular area.
- Gateways will be an asset in the interchange area directing travelers to the historic Windsor Center heading east on the corridor as well as at the western end of the roadway welcoming eastbound traffic into Windsor.

**Day Hill Road Interchange Study:**
Jennifer Carrier reviewed the CRCOG 2005 study findings related to the Day Hill Road Interchange (Interchange 38). The preferred interchange improvement provides a direct connection from Day Hill Road to I-91 northbound by the construction of spans over Route 75 and I91. During preliminary brainstorming the concept of a new I91 northbound off ramp directly serving Day Hill Road was discussed.

Key Comment Summary and Discussion:

- It is important to keep in mind that approximately 40% of the traffic coming into the Day Hill Road area is coming from areas north of Windsor.
- A new flyover concept linking I91 to Lamberton Road may exacerbate existing queuing issues for traffic using Lamberton to access Day Hill.
- Options for a new I91 northbound flyover ramp terminus could vary, depending on development within the area, anticipated impacts to Day Hill Road and the potential for properties being in a DOT non-access line.
- Not necessarily does the existing I91 northbound ramp need to be closed – it may serve traffic destined to Route 75 and shopping area.
- The intersection operations of Day Hill Road and Lamberton Road have the potential to deteriorate as the Day Hill corridor continues to develop. Future improvements regarding the connection of Day Hill to I 91 should take the issues at this intersection into consideration.

The committee would like to see the impacts of these improvement alternatives after they are run through the traffic model.

**Pigeon Hill Road Interchange:**

Alternatives that introduce a new I91 interchange in the Pigeon Hill Road area were discussed. The primary concept is to construct a new roadway north of Pigeon Hill Road and residences, between the Lamberton Road and Route 75.

Key Comment Summary and Discussion:

- Variations exist between truncating the old Pigeon Hill Road on either side of the existing highway bridge across I91 creating cul-de-sacs on both sides of the highway or keeping the existing overpass open to traffic and both options should be studied.
- A new I91 ramp system to a relocated Pigeon Hill Road shows a greater potential for an interchange with collector/distributer or frontage roads paralleling the highway.
- Weaving on I91 will have to be looked at in detail.
- There are many different possibilities for this improvement alternative. One possibility might be to do a scaled back highway interchange at the new Pigeon Hill Road location which would free more land for future development or avoid existing wetlands.
- Could an extension of Dunfey Lane be a consideration for a frontage on the west side of I91? Is there a possibility for a frontage road on the east side of the highway? Approximately 230 new residential homes have been approved for the existing golf-course east of I91, south of Pigeon Hill Road.
- Housing units (18) have been approved for the parcel in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Pigeon Hill Road and Lamberton Road.
- A new ramp system at a relocated Pigeon Hill Road does not necessarily have to connect to Route 75.

The Committee would like to see the impacts of these improvement alternatives once run through the traffic model.

**Wrap-up Comments& Questions**

- Many scenarios can be modeled using CRCOGs traffic model to produce post-improvement average daily traffic volumes for the roads in this area.
- Will other methods of congestion mitigation be considered such as transit usage and traffic demand management? It would be helpful if this study were to formalize recommendations for Traffic Demand Management for the town. CRCOG's Northwest Corridor Study, currently underway, is looking at transit usage in the general area. The study will be complete in the late summer/early fall and we will work to coordinate the findings with the ongoing process of this study. Also, our 2030 build out analysis includes some assumptions including travel demand management strategies and smart growth, etc. have been taken into account.
- What is deterring trucks from using Route 218 to get to Route 187/Route 189 instead of using Route 305? Route 218 is a heavily travelled roadway, serving approximately 38,000 vehicles per day. This fact coupled with the distance between the interstate and north / south routes such as Route 187 or Route 189, may deter trucks from using Route 218.

- A long term potential vision for the existing park and ride lot at the Exit 37 interchange (which also houses a state garage and state agriculture building on the same parcel) would be to create a multi-modal transit hub with housing and mixed types of land uses. This hub could be a mid-point connector from the new commuter line running through the center of Windsor to Route 305 and the Day Hill Corporate Area.

**5. Public Comments**

One member of the public, a Bloomfield Avenue resident, noted that not only are there problems accessing Route 305 from sides streets like Brewster and Sheffield, but residents of Bloomfield Avenue also have problems accessing Route 305 from their driveways. This resident noted a 2-2.5 minute wait to exit his driveway during the peak hours. He also mentioned that the benefit of having a queued left turn lane waiting to get into Brewster from the westbound direction is that it gives residents a gap to exit their driveways. This resident suggested that lights be timed to allow for gaps in traffic to aid access to Route 305 from driveways and side roads.

Another member of the public who stated that the past improvements at Addison Road may have had the unintended consequence of making the flow of traffic on Route 305 harder to penetrate from the side roads. He pointed out that Brewster Road which intersects Dudley Town Road may have more traffic than expected. This resident also commented that he walks on portions of Route 305 and notices curb cuts for wheelchairs and baby carriages with no crosswalks extending from them. He would like to see more pedestrian accommodations.

A final public comment was made regarding the Exit 38 interchange. This member of the public works on Day Hill Road and has heard that co-workers avoid the exit 38 interchange, particularly in the AM peak period. Any alternative to improve this interchange would undoubtedly improve conditions on Route 305 as well.

**6. Next Steps**

Jennifer Carrier informed the committee that the Project Team will now work on these concepts a bit more by identifying measurable impacts and potential costs.

The team will also take the summer to also analyze the future development traffic and model what impacts future improvements may have on this traffic

Jennifer Carrier said that the project team will schedule another Steering Committee meeting to discuss concepts along the entire corridor.

The next Windsor Advisory Committee meeting will be held in early fall and the Project Team will begin presenting possible dates for that meeting in mid-summer.

**7. Other Business**

No other business was brought to the attention of the committee.

**8. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.