

Capitol Region Council of Governments

241 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106

Final Endorsed by
Committee on 12/3/2008

Route 305 Advisory Committee Meeting
Rose Room, Windsor Town Hall
Tuesday, October 7, 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

Grayson Wright
Melanie Zimyeski
Jim Burke

ConnDOT
ConnDOT – Planning
Windsor Economic Development

Project Team

Jennifer Carrier
Emily Moos
Lia Huang
Rod Bascom
Jeff Parker
Dave Sousa

CRCOG
CRCOG
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Public Attendees

No one from the public was present to offer comments.

Meeting Purpose: Route 305 Corridor Study – Local Advisory Committee meeting to follow up on last meeting and discuss potential future improvement alternatives.

1. Welcome and Progress Update

Jennifer Carrier led introductions and updated the committee on progress since the June 4, 2008 Advisory Committee meeting. The following summarizes Ms. Carrier's update:

- Future development numbers were finalized and input into CRCOG's regional travel demand model.
- CRCOG input alternative concepts into the regional model and reviewed preliminary data to understand traffic variations. Memorandum of those findings, issued on September 29, 2008, summarizing the preliminary results will be discussed.
- A meeting was held on October 1, 2008 with the rail operator, the towns of Bloomfield and Windsor, and ConnDOT to discuss the corridor study and existing rail operations along the griffin line.

2. Adoption of Minutes (Meeting June 4, 2008)

Jennifer Carrier asked if there were any changes to the June 4, 2008 meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Mike O'Brien, seconded by Peter Souza, to accept the minutes of the June 4, 2008 meeting as written. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Preliminary Alternative Analysis Findings and Discussion

Jennifer Carrier reviewed the Alternatives Analysis-Traffic Variations Memorandum for the Committee. Ms. Carrier emphasized traffic reduction on Route 305 as being the primary focus of each alternative. Committee members questioned the preliminary data, feeling a Pigeon Hill Road interchange would offer more relief to Route 305. CRCOG will review model input internally and calibrate, adjusting such items as speed and capacity. The Committee also questioned what transit percentage was built into the model; CRCOG will review and report back to the Committee.

4. Future Conditions (with development) and Anticipated Traffic

Jennifer Carrier reviewed information related to future 2030 traffic growth, with development. The development reflects an extensive effort put forth by the towns and the consultant, accounting for steep slopes, wetlands, open space, and development trends. The 2030 scenario, with development, was compared to the baseline year (2005 which is very similar to 2007) and percentage growth was discussed.

5. Route 305 Potential Alternatives – Follow Up Discussion

Jeff Parker led a discussion on the future of Bloomfield Avenue. Key considerations are mobility, safety, access to adjacent residences and businesses, residential character/aesthetics, and potential impacts. The following alternatives for cross-sections were reviewed:

- A. No-build with spot improvements for safety and operations
- B. Three-lane section with two-way left turn lane
 - A Committee member felt the two-way left turn lane is not a clean way to manage traffic
 - A Committee member liked the idea, but felt that the two-way left turn lane can be unsafe if not used properly; some drivers may use this as a waiting area to merge after making a left turn
 - Some Committee members thought this two-way left turn lane may become a through lane during peak hours if drivers become frustrated; Jeff Parker added that additional enforcement or medians may help discourage this behavior
- C. Three-lane section with reverse-flow lane
 - A Committee member felt a reverse-flow lane did not match residential feel of the neighborhood
 - A Committee member commented that residents living on Bloomfield Avenue will need to be aware of the time before turning out of their driveway, creating confusion. Rod Bascom responded that traffic flow indication lights can be situated appropriately to be visible from all driveways
 - A Committee member mentioned that one could make an immediate right out of their driveway even if they need to turn left, but would need to travel well out of their way in order to eventually move in the direction they originally intended
 - A Committee member did not like the reverse-flow lane, but understands that this is one option to adequately manage traffic in a three-lane section instead of expanding the road to a four-lane section
- D. Four lane section with sidewalks and street trees
 - Left turning cars exiting from driveways or side streets will need to cross two lanes of traffic when exiting.
- E. Four lane section with narrow median, sidewalks and street trees
 - Proposed median is the same width as that on Broad Street
 - A Committee member mentioned that strategically placed islands will force cars, exiting from driveways, to make right turns rather than crossing two lanes to make a left—this works very well currently on Broad Street. Another committee member felt that cars forced to turn right may block the following left most lane when trying to make a u-turn

F. Four lane section with landscaped median, sidewalks and street trees

- This section will likely impact one home and one office more so than others.
- A Committee member felt that a new road similar to Day Hill Road would attract more vehicles.
- Concern about sight lines was raised; Jeff Parker assured that shrubs and appropriate tree types would be suggested.

General Committee comments on the above alternatives

- Implementation broken down into incremental changes would be helpful—a jump from now to 2030 may be difficult to understand how the installation would impact users/residents in the process; Rod Bascom stated that the proposed solutions can be broken down into near term and long term components
- The Committee needs to understand how public transit was factored into the model; public transit should be promoted in this plan
- The Town is trending toward recreating existing roads rather than building new roads
- Residents are most concerned about the noise and danger of living on state roadway; widening the road may cause increased concern over noise; traffic calming techniques will be implemented but because Bloomfield Avenue is a state road, trucks must be allowed access; this roadway must also satisfy capacity requirements
- Widening the road will also raise an issue of more snow being plowed onto a resident's property
- The long term vision (in 40 or 50 years) for the corridor must also be considered to minimize future conflict
- As opportunities present themselves, purchasing available property to plan for future conceptual alternatives may prove advantageous.

Jeff Parker continued the discussion with additional potential improvements in the area:

A. Sheffield Drive/Brewster Road

- Two suggestions were shared to join Sheffield Drive and Brewster Road
- Relatively minor street volume is observed on these streets during the peak hours; this intersection does not warrant a traffic signal at this time however the town may want to consider if warrants could be met under the coordinated signal system category. If widening was a considered alternative, the south side of the roadway may provide the best opportunity with the least amount of conflicts.

B. Marshall Phelps Road

- Trucks turning at this intersection are a concern
- One potential improvement may be the construction of a modern roundabout however a two-lane roundabout would be required to accommodate 2030 traffic volumes. ConnDOT does not currently support two lane roundabouts on state roads however it may be a consideration in the future.
- A Committee member commented that a roundabout will stop drivers from speeding to make a green traffic signal light, which currently exists.
- Other options for Marshall Phelps Road include the installation of channelized islands.

6. Public Comments

No one from the public was present to offer comments.

7. Next Steps

Jennifer Carrier reviewed the updated schedule provided to Committee members. The Committee preferred that our next AC meeting be held in late November or early December and that the next public meeting be held in early 2009.

8. Other Business

A question was posed about the current economic crisis and the development assumptions we used. Windsor would like to keep the original assumptions for future growth to keep the capacity for growth open.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.