



## Route 3 Traffic and Development Study EDS / Public Kickoff Meeting

**To:** Technical Review / Steering Committee  
Study Team

**ATTENDEES:** Economic Development Subcommittee      Public  
Study Team      Town Staff

**PRESENTERS:** CRCOG, Tighe & Bond, Susan Jones Moses, Fitzgerald & Halliday, and  
Weston Solutions

**FROM:** Chris Granatini, P.E.

**DATE:** December 8, 2010

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On December 8, 2010, the Economic Development Subcommittee of the Town Council (EDS) / Public Kickoff Meeting was conducted in the Rocky Hill Town Hall Council's Chambers. The meeting was held to introduce the Study Team to the members of the EDS and initiate the Public Outreach Process. The primary focus of the meeting was to begin the public outreach process, initiate development of overall study goals and objectives, and obtain input and feedback from the public on the current conditions, needs, and deficiencies in the study area.

The meeting was conducted in two parts. The first part of the meeting included a brief introduction of the study by Larrye deBear (EDS), and a presentation to the Public by CRCOG and the Tighe & Bond consulting team. A copy of the presentation slides is included as an attachment to this summary. The second part of the meeting involved open discussion with the public. The following summarized the key comments and issues identified by the public during the discussion.

### Open Discussion – Public Input and Comments

#### 1. Current Traffic Operations and Issues

- The Route 3 corridor was characterized as a commercial / commuter roadway. In general, the members of the public in attendance did not associate the corridor area a neighborhood as a general consensus, however one member of public indicated that there are select locations where you may see neighbors, but not viewed as a gathering place
- The route functions as a local and regional commuter route to Interstate 91 (Exit 23), Wethersfield, towns to the west, the Berlin Turnpike and points to the west via New Britain avenue (Route 160)
- Very difficult to make a left turn out of driveways and unsignalized intersections along Route 3 (ex. Rhodes Rd. – petition was circulated, expansion contingent upon new traffic signal, have requested signal twice but ConnDOT replied that warrants not met) during peak hours; some left turn lanes, but not enough
- When Route 3 is unable to adequately handle traffic, adjacent neighborhoods are affected with cut through traffic navigating around the corridor



- The public indicated interest in the ability to improve traffic conditions through the implementation of a traffic signal system that is coordinated using current technology to improve operations
- Pavement markings are difficult to see at night
- Through traffic vs. local traffic considerations
- Residents indicated and observed that Route 3 carries a lot of tractor trailer truck traffic
- The congestion and accidents that occur at Interchange 23 are a current concern and are anticipated to worsen going forward
- New Britain Avenue is a critical link to points to the west and the Berlin Turnpike. There is typically heavy left turn volume from Route 3 and vehicles queue up heading north on Cromwell Ave to make the left turn. Some residents go past the intersection and turn left on Cronin Drive to bypass the long left turn
- The current level of development and on-going commercial growth in the corridor continues to make traffic conditions worse in the area
- Resident noted that during the morning commuter peak period the new Dunkin Donuts at the intersection of West Street and Route 3 can queue vehicles waiting for the drive through back to the intersection and onto Route 3
- Specific areas of concern that were identified include
  1. Interchange 23 is a problem that needs to be looked at (at least one fatality was noted)
  2. New Britain Avenue is the main E-W connector out of Rocky Hill; left turn queues are bad here – some drivers turn right and u-turn to avoid this left turn
  3. Vehicles making a right turn on red from France Street to Route 3 block through movements heading south as they try to cross three lanes of traffic to head east on West Street
  4. Light at Dunkin Donuts strip mall helps exiting traffic but right-turning entering traffic blocks through movements on Route 3

## **2. Development – considerations/analysis**

- Rhodes Road, as a paper street extends to the west and connects to New Street. Future development along this future street could significantly change the operations of the Rhodes Road intersection at Route 3
- Potential for additional land use expansion along Brook Street (Gardiner Property)
- Large industrial / development growth in Cromwell – potential traffic and impact must be considered. Coordination with the Town of Cromwell to determine the potential for development within the study time horizon
- Cromwell is developing an industrial park along the west side of Cromwell Avenue just south of the Rocky Hill Town Line. DECD involved with Town of Cromwell on the economic development project
- Is Brook Street capable of handling potential truck traffic? Public commented that the street was supposed to be residential not industrial
- Current security gate operations at the Burriss Logistics site results in tractor trailer trucks backing up out of the site into the right turn lane into the site. This is an operational issue with the gate location in relation to the street



### 3. Truck traffic

- Find ways to better manage and mitigate the effects of truck traffic on the roadways
- It is perceived that trucks speed through residential areas even if ordinances restrict access
- Hard for trucks to make turns which affects traffic operations
- Feel unsafe walking/getting mail on Brook Street
- Number of stacked trucks safely accommodated must be looked at on Brook Street

### 4. General curb cut consolidation

- The roadway features a lot of curb cuts and it can be difficult to turn left out of the driveways and stop sign controlled streets along the stretch. Particular focus on the Rhodes Road intersection, which serves an active adult community and is also seeking approval for a new retail/commercial development on the corner with Cromwell Avenue and Rhodes Road.
- Westside Market/Modern Tire could have been combined
- Placement of future curb cuts is critical
- Bring business owners together and adjust zoning regulations to address this issue
- Town P+Z has tried to consolidate but it is difficult
- Town has some success along the west side of Route 3 near New Britain Avenue, but was unable to connect the Suburban Liquor Store with the other adjacent developments that are connected
- STC and ConnDOT identified the offset driveway across from Rhodes Road as one factor in the consideration of a traffic signal at this location.

### 5. Aesthetics

- There was an indication and interest in improving the overall aesthetics of the Route 3 corridor. Trees, sidewalks, bicycle accommodations, providing a more "human scale" to the roadway, rather than the highway setting.
- France Street appearance needs improvement (operational improvement as well, but this is being addressed in a separate study)
- Should coordinate any streetscape improvements with utilities – may get torn up right after installed for utility work
- Brook Street resident indicated the desire to implement a residential theme and character along the residential section of Brook Street. This could include sidewalks on both sides, trees, street lights, bike accommodations, traffic calming to convey a neighborhood setting and discourage truck traffic.



## 6. Multi-Modal Transportation Issues

- Need to make study area roadways more bicycle/pedestrian friendly and more accommodating of these users
- Bicycling advocate indicated that Route 3 in addition to Route 99 provide the only continuous north-south routes in the area and that the roadways should be made safer and more accommodating to bicycle traffic. These comments were in response to a statement of a resident as to the inappropriateness of bicycle traffic on Route 3 due to safety concerns.
- It was commented that encouraging additional modes of transportation will help decrease congestion and create a neighborhood/community atmosphere
- Route 3 considered dangerous for bicyclists so some do not want bicyclists on this road – may be able to better accommodate to increase safety for all users
- Cycling Concepts retail store is located in Shunpike Village Shopping Plaza on Route 3 within the study area.
- Curb cut reduction will increase cyclist safety

## 7. Study Limits

- Many members of the public expressed a concern that Elm Street was not included in the study area. Public commented that study limits should include Elm Street (down to blinking light) at Gilbert Avenue.
- Public comment that portions of New Britain Avenue should be included in the study limits
- France Street – Town is conducting a separate study for traffic calming opportunities on France Street
- A member of the EDS asked if Origin & Destination surveys were being conducted to determine the regional impact of trips that are travelling through the study area so that we know where people in the area are coming and going from.

## 8. Other Miscellaneous Comments from Public

- Need to seek a balance for all modes of travel, incorporating Complete Streets, balance bike accommodations with vehicular needs, consider transit improvements and facilities
- The public questioned the ability to accurately look out 20 years and inquired if there are any studies from 20 years ago that might provide an indication of the ability to accurately forecast traffic and development activity and changes in the study area
- The challenge of access management is engaging local property owners to participate in effective curb cut reduction
- Potential short-term improvements include a review of the existing Route 3 and West Street traffic signal system to determine if operations are optimized.



## 9. Next Steps

1. Presentation indicated that Data Collection is underway, which will lead into the initiation of the analysis of Existing Conditions in early 2011.
2. A schedule of the Public Outreach activities was presented and indicated that the next opportunity for public involvement would be at the January 19, 2011 TR/SC Meeting and that the next Public Outreach Meeting would take place in the Spring 2011.

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