

## Route 6 Public Workshop Notes December 8 and 17, 2009

### TRANSPORTATION COMMENTS

#### *Perceptions*

- Not the resident's roadway
- Busy and too-fast
- Outdated
- Through patrons are not respectful of local residential properties
- Route 6 is a lot better than before
- DOT improvements have made driver's use Route 6 more – as opposed to Route 44
- Route 6 is convenient unless you are stuck behind a truck
- Police are strict on speeding (1 mph over the limit is ticketed)

#### *Mobility and Access*

- Primarily a commuter road
- E-W connector between Providence and Hartford
- Public interested in understanding through vs. local traffic (relative volumes and accident relation; wanted to look at accident records – is one local and one through vehicle involved?)
- Public interested in existing transit service
- Locals use back roads – really no need to use Route 6 unless destination bound (ie Munsons)
- Route 6 WB to Route 44 EB (Mansfield) connection is preferred
- High speed/quick way to get to Willimantic
- Residents need to wait to get out of driveways during peak hours
- Some residents expressed a preference to bike within the wide shoulder
- Rail trail should be fully connected (help complete East Coast Greenway)
- Connections to the Hop River trail as well as access to the river should be improved (signing, parking, etc); Views for and against river access signing were voiced
- Need to construct trail's bridge to cross Route 316
- Sight line distances need to be improved near side streets/access points
  - Departing Munson's driveway, difficult to find gap and in winter hard to get enough traction to turn out onto RT 6
  - Steeles Crossing is very steep with limited sight lines; in the winter, it is difficult to get traction to enter RT 6; very difficult to turn left onto RT 6
  - South Street is very awkward with limited sight lines
  - Andover Post Office has a very small driveway – difficult to access
  - Pulling out of the Columbia Dunkin' Donuts & transfer station is difficult to enter RT 6 because cannot find a gap
  - Problems entering and exiting Edgerton Road to RT 6 due to sight lines (issue is greatest turning left onto RT 6)
  - Flanders Road has limited sight lines entering and exiting RT 6
- New traffic signals may help drivers enter/exit RT 6 however would prefer not to have additional signals added; almost impossible to get onto RT 6 from the side streets (left turns are not even attempted – no use in trying) – hard to find gap in traffic; need to give more opportunities for access – able to adjust signal timing of existing signals?
- Spot zoned, erratic development makes unsafe (too many access points/curb cuts on a high speed hwy); need to reduce number of curb cuts
- Bypass lanes (climbing lanes) further east on RT 6 improve traffic movement and reduce driver anxiety
- RT 6/66 intersection is a major opportunity to resolve traffic issues while creating a sense of arrival

- Commerce Drive and Cards Mill Road have a confusing island in the middle of the intersection – it should either be more prominent (larger) or removed altogether
- Left hand turn lanes have been helpful, but are also dangerous because are sometimes used as a passing lane (specific mention of noticeable benefits at Steeles Crossing and mfg company in Bolton)
- Traffic congestion is highly dependent on commuter traffic – direction travelling in peak time makes a big difference

### ***Safety***

- The bridge from Route 6 WB to Route 44 / I384 is icy and dangerous during the winter
- Residential driveways opposite Johnson Drive in Bolton have a difficult time turning left into their driveways because of the left turn lane accessing Johnson Drive
- Used to be “Suicide 6”; has improved since, but is still not a “safe” corridor
- Feel road is “over-protected”; Hawaii roadways have no guiderail – Route 6 has it everywhere
- “Turn Your Lights On...” signs heighten awareness that you may be in an un-safe area; locals don’t even see the signs anymore
- RT 6 WB approaching I-384W is very difficult to check RT 44 WB traffic for clearance (awkward alignment)
- Notch Road – dangerous to pull out of because of limited sight lines; dangerous to turn onto because of potential rear-end
- Motorists traveling eastbound onto Route 6 from I384 are traveling excessively fast; the townhill grade contributes to the speeds
- Police patrolling of the trail is preferred

### ***The Future of Route 6?***

- Should be a 4-lane highway (25,000 ADT is typically threshold where 4 lanes becomes necessary)
- Potential focal point/gateway area between Notch Road and South Road
- Need to balance local and through traffic, right now is favored to through traffic (local uses like school buses and oil delivery trucks need to be accommodated too)
- If gas prices are higher, traffic could be reduced with increased telecommuting
- Public liked streetscape look for future development because will slow traffic
- Prefer not to introduce a roundabout
- Would like to see intersection standards (normalize intersections with uniform recommendations – if medians are introduced, do so in a uniform manner)
- Traffic calming in the vicinity of I384 / Route 6 EB should be implemented
- Public seemed indifferent to medians with trees for traffic calming (LADA consulting team presented information, only comment was to ensure access is preserved)
- Residents do not want RT 6 to look like the Berlin Turnpike or RT 44 in Avon
- Would like bypass lanes of some sort especially if traffic is expected to grow with future development
- Traffic calming should be implemented at proposed nodes and near Andover Center
- Some residents expressed that the limited # of traffic signals was an asset
- Preference for non-traditional signing along the corridor – DOT “standard” signs are not preferred
- Land uses that reduce traffic – such as a research business or light industry – are preferred

### **Land Use Comments**

- Area south of RT 6 between Notch Road and Stony Road is zoned industrial, but encumbered by floodplain/wetlands
- Coventry parcel is difficult terrain and poor soils for septic, otherwise a good location for development
- In the vicinity of South Street, prime agricultural land/floodplain
- Columbia parcel north of RT 6 between Whitney Rd and Hop River Rd – development potential is limited due to wetlands/floodplain; there was also a question by a resident as to whether property on Route 6 in Columbia is located within a conservation zone

- A mini-Evergreen Walk might be nice to have along the corridor
- Would like corridor to develop with a bank, drug store, small theater, enhanced grocery store or restaurant; some felt that a restaurant did not belong in a strip mall
- There is no rest stop or tourist attraction / destination; some however felt this use would not be appropriate along the corridor

***(As it relates to Traffic)***

- Development is okay if it doesn't bring more traffic; there is enough traffic already existing (no doctor's offices or CVS; development like MTM and Scott Electrocrafts is better)
- Development should cater to existing commuters
- Nodal development will reduce curb cuts and number of traffic signals; will increase safety
- No new bars (may increase drunk driving on RT 6)
- Interested in bank, gym, business center/professional office space, and grocery
- Traffic operations must accommodate existing and proposed development
- Public wanted development: at RT6/66 intersection, Columbia town garage/transfer station. Post Farm, Coventry parcel (where holistic site was originally slated), Camp Johnson (Boy Scouts), near Munson's & Ice Palace, Windham's Nursery
- Public did not want development: at RT 6/66 intersection, Post Farm, Camp Johnson
- Development like a framing shop could produce traffic during non-peak times – acceptable
- Industrial park/research (like Silicon Valley) development would limit traffic addition
- If sales-type development, should be open after the AM peak hour since AM conditions are poorest
- Property that currently abuts the Andover museum could provide for good parking

**Other Comments**

***Preservation Considerations***

- Historic highway
- Preserve historic architecture & remaining farms – especially in Andover
- DEP is interested in preserving grasslands, river and watershed
- Corporate office space development okay if offset with preservation (pond/natural landscaping); this type of setting diminishes the size of this type of building
- Should enhance existing conditions
- Andover farm is a significant scenic factor; potential golf course?
- Andover historic center is a major focal point with little opportunity for infill/expansion due to terrain, river, wetlands and rail trail

***General Notes***

- Must convince ConnDOT to act rationally and in concert with the towns they serve
- Need dialog with state ASAP (ConnDOT, Army Corps of Engineers, DEP)
- Should review ConnDOT's EIS on RT 6 (14 volumes)
- Review State Plan of Conservation and Development (also bring to next public meeting)
- Don't forget RT 66 portion of study – please be explicit to include in future discussions
- Resident made a comment related to DOT stating that Route 6 is over capacity 5 hours per day
- Public wants to know what other roads are comparable related to ADT
- Sewer extension is not planned right now – this will keep development small
- Comment that driving to Hartford is almost a necessity – the buses don't accommodate door-to-door service
- For next public meeting Transportation exercise consider the question ' Did you see anything you like' and include pictures of traffic calming, signals, islands, roundabouts, transit....