



Summary of Notes and Comments from Public Meetings

December 14 and December 15, 2011

Meeting Date and Location:

Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at 7 p.m.
Beckish Senior Center, 188 Route 66
Columbia, CT

- Number of Public Attendees (excluding Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) and study team members): 7
- Representing Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) – Basilia Huang, Rob Aloise.
- Representing CHA (CRCOG's consultant) – Jeff Parker, Casey Hardin.
- Meeting Overview and Format: This meeting was the first of two public meetings that compose the second of three rounds of public meetings for the Route 6 Hop River Corridor Transportation Study.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to present and obtain public input on preliminary recommendations that have been developed with input from the REDC and participating stakeholders.

A formal PowerPoint® presentation by CHA was preceded by a brief open house for public review of large-scale exhibits and informational boards. A public question and comment period followed the presentation.

- Summary of public questions and comments:
 - An attendee questioned why the concept for Lighthouse Corners (roundabout with village) retains a slip lane despite the noted issue of the existing high speed slip lanes. CHA replied that the slip lane from westbound Route 6 expressway to westbound Route 6 is required to maintain acceptable operation of the roundabout due to the high traffic volume. CHA noted that this slip lane will be designed with a smaller radius to encourage slower speeds.
 - An attendee questioned whether transverse rumble strips had been considered on the Route 6 expressway approach to the Route 6/66 intersection to encourage slower speeds. CHA replied that rumble strips had not been evaluated and noted that noise generated by the rumble strips could be an issue considering the desire to create a village node in this area.
 - An attendee suggested that there should be a slip lane for traffic turning right from Route 66 to Route 66 East since this is a high volume movement. CHA replied that the traffic volumes do not require a slip lane for the roundabout to operate acceptably and noted that the right turning movement would be fairly free-flowing through the roundabout at most times.



- Summary of public questions and comments, Columbia Meeting (continued):
 - An attendee suggested that high traffic volumes in the afternoon from approximately 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. will cause excessive delays at the roundabout. CHA replied that the two-lane roundabout operates comparably to a signalized intersection in terms of average delay and levels of service.
 - An attendee inquired where there is a two-lane roundabout in operation similar to the one presented. CHA replied that there is a similar two-lane roundabout in Keene, NH and noted that there are no two-lane roundabouts in Connecticut.
 - An attendee questioned who has the right-of-way at a roundabout. CHA replied that circulating traffic has the right-of-way and entering traffic is required to yield to circulating traffic.
 - Attendees questioned whether a roundabout can accommodate the passage of large vehicles. CHA replied that roundabouts can be designed to accommodate large vehicles and noted that the two-lane roundabout, as shown in the concept, can accommodate a large truck side-by-side with a passenger vehicle within the roundabout.
 - An attendee noted that the realignment of Route 6 on the eastbound approach to the intersection and the development opportunities shown north of Route 6 in that area are within the floodplain of the Hop River and will be difficult to develop due to existing flooding issues. CHA replied that the concept was developed to minimize floodplain impacts and noted that floodplain impacts would have to be mitigated. Potential floodplain impacts are being evaluated and documented as part of this study.
 - An attendee noted that there is currently no left turn arrow for vehicles turning left from eastbound Route 6 to Route 6 expressway. CHA replied that a near-term need for signal modifications will be evaluated.
 - An attendee noted concern about the occasional traveler not knowing how to drive through a roundabout, particularly a two-lane roundabout at this location. CHA replied that the concept with the two-lane roundabout is understood to be a long-term project and noted that driver experience, in general, will be much greater in the future as more roundabouts are implemented in the state and region.
 - An attendee questioned what the general feedback from the public is regarding roundabouts. CHA replied that public opinion is generally favorable once a new roundabout is in operation, though initial opposition or apprehension to the proposition of a roundabout is typical.
 - An attendee suggested that the Route 6/66 intersection be improved with a flyover from eastbound Route 6 to Route 6 expressway to benefit through traffic. CHA replied that a flyover had not been considered. A flyover is not warranted to provide acceptable operations and is not consistent with the desired context for this area.



- Summary of public questions and comments, Columbia Meeting (continued):
 - An attendee questioned whether a traffic analysis has been performed for the roundabout and a traffic signal. CHA replied that a traffic analysis of the afternoon peak hour traffic conditions for the future study year (2030) shows that a two-lane roundabout will operate at level of service (LOS) C; a comparable signalized intersection with some capacity improvements will operate at LOS D or better (Note – LOS values range from A to F with A reflecting the best operations with lowest delay).
 - An attendee suggested that the study leaves out recommendations for access improvements to the Hop River. CHA replied that access improvements to the river are part of the concept in Historic Andover and that opportunities exist for improved river access from Route 66 in Columbia near the Windham town line.
 - An attendee noted concern about the realignment of Route 6 reducing the visibility of existing businesses near the intersection of Route 6/66. CHA indicated that there are opportunities that can be explored to maximize or enhance the visibility of businesses in the area. It was also noted that the village development desired for this area is intended to benefit both existing and future businesses by creating a destination that will overall attract more patrons to the area.
 - An attendee suggested that the Hop River Trail trailhead parking area in Columbia be constructed of gravel or other environmentally-sensitive material, not bituminous pavement.

Meeting Date and Location:

Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 7 p.m.
Andover Community Room, 17 School Road
Andover, CT

- Number of Public Attendees (excluding Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) and study team members): 25 (approximately)
- Representing Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) – Basilia Huang, Rob Aloise, Jennifer Carrier.
- Representing CHA (CRCOG's consultant) – Jeff Parker, Casey Hardin.
- Meeting Overview and Format: This meeting was the second of two public meetings that compose the second of three rounds of public meetings for the Route 6 Hop River Corridor Transportation Study.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to present and obtain public input on preliminary recommendations that have been developed with input from the REDC and participating stakeholders.

A formal PowerPoint® presentation by CHA was preceded by a brief open house for public review of large-scale exhibits and informational boards. A public question and comment period followed the presentation.



- Summary of public questions and comments:
 - An attendee questioned how the recommendations would be funded. CHA replied that anticipated costs, potential funding opportunities, and other implementation considerations will be evaluated as the next step in this study.
 - An attendee expressed concern about the installation of raised medians throughout the corridor and potentially blocking driveway access. CHA replied that the intent is to provide landscaped medians in select locations where they will provide aesthetic and speed mitigation benefits without limiting access to existing businesses and driveways. It is also the intent to utilize medians to manage access to new local streets in the future, as necessary to promote safety and maintain through traffic operations.
 - An attendee noted that streetscape improvements that were recommended under the REDC's previous Land Use Study appear to be absent. CHA replied that streetscape improvements consistent with those proposed in the Land Use Study are incorporated into the concepts though they are not fully detailed on the preliminary graphics at this time.
 - An attendee expressed concerns over environmental impacts associated with the concept presented for Historic Andover, particularly floodplain impacts. CHA replied that floodplain and wetland impacts would have to be mitigated. Potential floodplain and wetland impacts are being evaluated and documented as part of this study.
 - An attendee noted that the Historic Andover concept will include a large amount of new impervious area which could require a new closed drainage system and noted that the system should be designed to be environmentally friendly and not discharge directly to the Hop River. CHA replied that drainage system design is not part of the study, but potential drainage issues and concerns for the area will be identified and documented. John Pagini of the REDC added that low impact development strategies will be utilized in sensitive areas.
 - An attendee suggested that lowering the elevation of the Hop River Trail along Route 6 in Historic Andover may not be possible due to site constraints. CHA replied that a relatively short distance would be required at each end to transition to and from a lower trail elevation.
 - An attendee suggested that it would be preferred to maintain the elevation of the existing trail, which is further from traffic and avoids conflicts between vehicle and bicyclist headlights.
 - An attendee noted that CTDEEP and CTDOT might need to approve changes to the elevation and grades of the trail because it is a state park and there might be future opportunity to restore rail service along the line. CHA noted that coordination with CTDOT is on-going and coordination with CTDEEP is likely.
 - An attendee suggested that the trail could be split to bring one section down to the elevation of Route 6 for a crossing at Long Hill Road, leaving a continuous section of the path at its existing elevation.



- Summary of public questions and comments, Andover Meeting (continued):
 - An attendee suggested that there should be a truck climbing lane for westbound Route 6 approaching the junction with Route 44 in Bolton Notch. CHA replied that the need and feasibility of a climbing lane is would be investigated.
 - An attendee suggested that there should be near term improvements for access to the Hop River Trail trailhead in Bolton, off the Route 6/44 overlap. The existing driveway requires motorists to slow in traffic and turn approximately 180 degrees from the high speed expressway. CHA replied that opportunities to improve access to the trailhead would be investigated.
 - An attendee noted that speeds on the Route 6/44 overlap are an issue and that measures should be included in the study to address speeding on the eastbound approach to the Route 6 and Route 44 split in Bolton Notch. CHA replied that opportunities to provide speed mitigation on this approach are being considered as part of this study.