

Meredith US 3/NH 25 Improvements Transportation Planning Study

Project Advisory Committee Meeting No. 24

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: September 24, 2008
DATE OF MEETING: September 16, 2008
LOCATION OF MEETING: Meredith Community Center
One Circle Drive, Meredith, NH
ATTENDED BY:

Advisory Committee Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Carol Granfield	Meredith Town Manager
Kevin Morrow	Meredith Police Chief
Mike Faller	Meredith Public Works Director
John Edgar	Community Development Director
Warren Clark	Meredith Citizen Representative
Robert LeCount	Meredith Conservation Commission
Fred Hatch	Meredith Transportation Advisory Task Force
Robert Snelling	Town of Holderness
Rusty McLearn	Greater Meredith Program
Bill Bayard	Lakes Region Planning Commission
John Moulton	Meredith Citizen Representative
Sandra Sullivan	Meredith Citizen Representative
Ken Renoux	Meredith Citizen Representative
Tim Drew	NH DES

Others

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Jim Marshall	NHDOT
Cathy Goodmen	NHDOT
Gene McCarthy	McFarland-Johnson, Inc.

MEETING MINUTES:

The Agenda for the meeting is attached. These minutes are formatted to follow the Agenda Items.

1. Opening/Introduction

Jim Marshall opened the meeting. He explained the agenda mentioned the desire to complete Part A of the project. He also presented the Time Magazine article that was sent to the committee from Warren that discusses roundabouts. The committee mentioned that there is still apprehension in New England concerning roundabouts.

A question was asked about the signage for a Roundabout. Gene mentioned that in other places signage was reduced as the public became more familiar and accustomed to driving roundabouts. It was also discussed that there is some disagreement as to whether trees should be placed in the center islands. Jim also presented a workbook that is designed to educate children about roundabouts.

2. Public Informational Meeting Review

Gene opened this discussion by stating the Public Informational Meetings were a success. He mentioned that there were over 60 citizens who attended the three sessions. The presence of PAC members was very helpful as citizens saw who was participating in the process. Most of what was heard from the public validated the screening performed by the PAC.

Gene stated that 45 Questionnaires were completed. Gene then discussed some of the key results of the questionnaire, they include:

- The new Roundabout at Parade Road received 35 positive votes.
- 35 respondents disagree with doing nothing. They believe there is a problem and something must be done.
- 39 respondents feel aesthetics are important.
- 31 respondents support a three lane section along Route 3.
- 22 respondents disagreed with a four lane section.
- The only pedestrian solution that received support was the signal. All of the grade separation options received negative scores.
- The single lane roundabout was liked best for the Route 3/25 intersection, it received 27 positive votes. The traffic signal received 22 negative votes while the two lane roundabout received mixed votes.
- Bike lanes received slightly more positive votes but received mostly (13) neutral votes.
- A school connector received slightly more positive votes but mostly (14) neutral votes.
- Re-defining the character of the rural portion of Route 25 was split. There were 17 positive and negative votes and 7 neutral votes. People who lived along this portion of Route 25 liked the idea and those who drive through didn't like it.

John Moulton asked if members of the public agreed that there is a pedestrian problem since the solutions received poor scores. Gene answered that he thought the public agreed that there is a problem but they did not like the grade separated solutions.

The use of cadets to manage pedestrians and vehicles was mentioned. Gene stated that he observed the cadets on Route 3 the Saturday of the public meeting and thought they were doing a great job. Others agreed that they have been helping ease the congestion. How a

roundabout handled pedestrian traffic was mentioned. He was thought something could be learned from the new roundabout in Plymouth. Jim stated that he would ask to find out.

Other comments made concerning the public meetings included:

- There were quite a few new faces. Not only the regular citizens who show up for meetings.
- Tuesday afternoon had the most people show up, which was a surprise.
- A good turn out on Saturday since it was such a beautiful day.
- PAC members got several compliments from citizens who attended.
- One citizen stated that their mind was changed by what they heard at the meeting.
- PAC members felt that what was learned at the meetings would help future screening.

3. Part A Completion

Gene began by presenting the schedule for the project. Part B would occur in 2009 and Part C in 2010 so that construction could occur in 2011 as currently programmed. A question was asked about how secure the funding is. Jim stated that the project should proceed assuming the funding will be there because it is currently programmed. He said that the Ten-Year Plan process was about to begin.

The question of proceeding with the entire project was raised since the funding could not compete the entire 4 miles of Route 3 and 25. Jim and Gene stated that it would help the overall project to complete the entire corridor because it would put the project ahead of others. Having a plan would put this project ahead of others as funding becomes available.

Gene then presented a proposal to streamline the remaining screening. The design team is concerned that screening all the remaining alternatives and components will take too much time and jeopardize the overall schedule. The idea is to complete the detailed screening for the corridor alternatives only and use a simpler screening for the components. There was consensus that this makes sense. It was agreed that the simpler screening would be done using the screening summary as a guide. The hope is to complete the screening with two more PAC meetings and this would complete the Part A steps.

John Edgar asked about the involvement of Project for Public Spaces (PPS). Gene mentioned that a team from PPS was in Meredith before and during Labor Day weekend. They observed the corridor and are making recommendations concerning how to make the proposed alternatives more people friendly. They have a concept to extend Main Street along Route 25. Gene hopes to have their concepts to present at the next PAC meeting. Rusty mentioned that he met with the Phil and Renee of PPS while they were in Meredith. He said they thought the northern section of Route 3 was "hopeless".

4. Dinner Break

5. Alternative Screening

It was decided to begin with component screening. The first component was Bike Lanes.

Bike Lanes

Gene mentioned that bike lanes are a good use of the space provided for a two lane cross section with median. For emergency vehicles to pass, a minimum of about 20 feet of width is required for each traffic direction. Bike lanes work because it means no vehicles will be parked in the extra width, only 12 feet is required for vehicles, and emergency vehicles can get by.

The committee gave full green scores for Community Vision, Public Health, Safety, Support, and Transportation Choice; ½ green scores for Access and Mobility; and yellow scores for the remainder.

The consensus was that Bike Lanes are Reasonable for further consideration. It was decided that the No Bike Lane Component was not necessary to screen.

Pedestrian Crossings

The discussion concerning separating pedestrian and vehicle traffic focused on the views of the public. The only concept that received a positive score from the public was pedestrian signals. None of the grade separation concepts received positive scores. Following are the topics discussed:

- The underpass would block views and this was not liked.
- The pedestrian signal has the potential to help the operation of a roundabout by creating gaps in the main traffic flow that allows the other approaches access.
- There was concern that pedestrians negatively impact the slow continuous flow of traffic that is part of the vision. Gene stated that this is a potential but because of the slow traffic and short crossing distance it is mitigated.
- There was concern that a bridge or tunnel was a big expense and impact for a seasonal problem.
- There was a suggestion to move the parking as to divert pedestrian traffic. Gene stated that the draw of pedestrian is the Lake and if the parking area is converted to park area it could actually increase pedestrian traffic.
- Some felt the pedestrian signals or cadets were sufficient.

There was a motion to eliminate all the grade separation components. Mike Faller argued that one of them should remain for further consideration. After additional discussion, it was agreed that the Pedestrian Underpass should be rated Reasonable along with the Pedestrian Signals.

Close Main Street connection at Route 3/25

This was an idea that was proposed because Main Street is closed at times for events. The committee mentioned that closing Main Street would hurt the businesses. It is closed for the yearly Craft Fair and the businesses must close. The Main Street connection provides the best access to Northbound Route 3 and eastbound Route 25 from the area west of Route 3.

The committee felt this was an Unreasonable concept because of its impact to the local economy and its impact on access and mobility.

Elevated Deck over Route 3

This was an idea proposed by a Meredith Resident to provide a space over Route 3 that would provide access for pedestrians over Route 3, but also make it a destination. The deck would have a park with gardens and benches, shops, cafes, etc.

The committee felt this was an Unreasonable concept because it did not fit the character of Meredith. They felt it was more appropriate in an urban setting.

Rural Route 25

Gene described that there are two corridor alternatives for the rural portion of Route 25 that begins near the school complex and extends to the Centre Harbor town line. One alternative is to maintain the corridor as a rural highway, with a speed limit of 45 mph, and make safety improvements at the intersections to support this type of roadway. The other alternative is to re-define the corridor as a village roadway, with a 35 mph speed limit, and make safety improvements to support this type of roadway. Gene stated that with a lower speed limit, some of the existing intersections may be safe.

There was a great deal of discussion concerning the priorities of the project and whether time should be spent on this portion. Jim and Gene stated that this is part of the project and deserves consideration. Several of the committee members are on the committee representing the concerns of this part of the project. Jim further commented that it makes sense to establish a vision for the Route 25 corridor because as safety funding becomes available, it can be implemented more easily.

Several issues were mentioned regarding the corridor, they include:

- The non-uniform speed limits are a problem.
- Safety is a key concern at the Patrician Shores access.
- Bike lanes are not a priority.
- Safety at intersection is due to high speeds and limited sight distance.
- Residents along the corridor liked the idea of slower traffic.
- There was concern about how speeds would be reduced. Gene stated that it would have to be more than signing. Physical changes would need to be made to slow vehicles down.

In the end the committee agreed that both corridor alternatives are Reasonable and should be considered in Part B.

6. Next Steps

Two additional PAC meetings have been scheduled, October 21 and November 18.

7. Adjourn

Submitted by,
Gene McCarthy, P.E.
McFarland-Johnson, Inc.



GEORGE N. CAMPBELL, JR.
COMMISSIONER

JEFF BRILLHART, P.E.
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

Meredith 10430 US 3/25 Improvements Transportation Planning Study

Project Advisory Committee

September 16, 2008

Tuesday, 5:00 to 8:00 PM

Meredith Community Center
One Circle Drive, Meredith, NH

AGENDA

1. Opening / Introduction
2. Public Informational Meeting Review
3. Part A Completion
4. Dinner break (6:15 PM +/- to 6:45 PM +/-)
5. Alternative Screening
6. Next Steps
7. Adjourn (8:00 PM)

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) is defined as “a collaborative interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility.”

Contacts: James A. Marshall
Project Manager, NHDOT
TEL: 603-271-6472
JAMarshall@dot.state.nh.us

Gene McCarthy
Project Manager
McFarland-Johnson, Inc.
TEL: 603-225-2978
gmccarthy@mjinc.com

Website: www.meredith3-25.com