

Meredith US Route 3/ NH Route 25 Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 4, 2014

Committee Members Present:

Lou Kahn, Chairman, Board of Selectmen Rep.
Liz Lapham, Planning Board Rep.
Jack Carty, Greater Meredith Program Rep.
Rusty McLear, Greater Meredith Program Rep. (Alternate)
L. Michael Hatch
Fred Hatch
Warren Clark
Sandra Sullivan
Phil Warren, Town Manager
John Edgar, Community Development Director

Project Team Members Present:

Don Lyford, Project Manager, NHDOT
Gene McCarthy, Project Manager, McFarland Johnson
Jeff Santacruce, McFarland Johnson

The December 4, 2014 meeting of the US Route 3/ NH Route 25 Advisory Committee was held at the Meredith Community Center. The meeting was brought to order at 3:01 PM by Chairman Kahn.

Chairman Kahn distributed a draft handout "Points for Possible Discussion" dated 12/4/14. This was discussed later in the meeting.

Approval of Minutes. The draft minutes of November 6, 2014 were reviewed. Mike Hatch made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Liz Lapham seconded the motion. There were no corrections or changes. Chairman Kahn declared the minutes approved as written.

Gene McCarthy advised that he has presented the single lane roundabout system to the NH DOT leadership. Gene noted that although the NH DOT expressed concerns about remaining congestion, they understand the constraints and the town's position to this point. NH DOT advised MFJ to continue with the current proposal to the public hearing with the Meredith Board of Selectmen.

Phil Warren, Town Manager asked for clarification regarding the process and timing. Gene and Don Lyford advised that following a favorable hearing with the Board of Selectmen, there would be a review by the NH DOT leadership. If accepted by the NHDOT leadership, the development of environmental documentation would take place pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A state-appointed commission would then conduct the NH DOT public hearing

which could be held in the summer of 2015. Following a favorable NH DOT public hearing, the project would proceed to final design, permitting and land acquisition in 2016. The project would be advertised at the end of 2016 or early 2017. Construction funds are programmed for 2017. Gene advised further that he did not anticipate any unusual environmental issues to come up that could impact timing. Gene mentioned that storm water management will be a challenge when the project gets into engineering design. Gene also noted that the specific timing of construction has not yet been determined noting the potential economic impacts to local businesses during construction.

Mike Hatch reiterated the importance of having opportunity for public input. The two public hearings discussed previously would be the formal opportunity for public input.

Phil Warren questioned when department heads would have an opportunity for comment noting that the Fire Chief has concerns regarding emergency response. Phil shares those concerns. Chairman Kahn advised that the plan was for the Town Manager to be the conduit for that input. Phil responded that until this point he has not had a plan to share with department heads. Chairman Kahn asked Phil to meet with department heads and to share any concerns with MFJ so that any concerns can be addressed prior to the hearing before the Board of Selectmen scheduled for January 26, 2015. Lou noted that if an additional committee meeting were necessary to address department head concerns it could be scheduled. Phil will follow up with department heads and MFJ.

Lake Street/ US Route 3- NH Route 25/ Pleasant Street Single Lane Roundabout System.

Gene indicated that at the November meeting he was asked to continue to refine the 3-roundabout system. Gene presented a revised concept plan dated December 2014 which will be put on project web site. The concept plan included the following characteristics:

- Single lane roundabouts would be located at Lake Street, US Route 3/NH Route 25 and NH Route 25 and Pleasant Street.
- Each roundabout would provide pedestrian crossings.
- Impacts to the Bootleggers building would be avoided.
- Impact to the three other corners would occur but have been minimized.
- Approximately 5-6 parking spaces would be lost at Mill Falls Market Place and possibly 10 spaces at the Inn at Bay Point. Gene presented a revised parking alignment at Bay Point that reduces the loss to one to two spaces.
- A slip lane is provided for westbound traffic on NH Route 25 wishing to turn onto US Route 3 north. This feature is primarily for geometric purposes (as opposed to providing a significant capacity benefit).
- Two right turn lanes onto NH Route 25 would taper to one lane entering the roundabout at Pleasant Street.
- The curb line on NH Route 25 at Scenic Park would be held. Approximate 5-10' of impact would occur on the MVSBS property.
- A 6' median would be located between the roundabout at US Route 3/NH Route 25 and the roundabout at NH Route 25 and Pleasant Street.
- The primary access to MVSBS and the shopping center would be via the NH Route 25/Pleasant Street roundabout.
- The easterly entrance to the shopping center would remain.

- Impacts to the Lakeside Deli building would be avoided.
- A three lane section (thru lane in each direction plus a dual use, center turn lane) would extend from the easterly entrance of shopping center to the recent improvements at the Rite Aid store.
- On US Route 3, an 8' median would extend from a roundabout at Lake Street to the US Route 3/NH Route 25.
- Either side of the 8' median would be 20' curb to curb (two 12' lanes plus one 8' shoulder) in each direction. The extra shoulder width is intended to provide additional space for emergency response vehicles.
- The median would preclude northbound left turns onto Dover Street. Left turning traffic would proceed to the US Route 3/ NH Route 25 roundabout to reverse direction and turn right onto Dover Street.
- The Lake Street roundabout would connect to the town parking lot at the municipal docks. The existing parking configuration would remain essentially as it is today.
- The Lake Street roundabout could be modified slightly to ensure that commercial trucks and fire apparatus could make the left turn from US route 3 northbound onto Lake Street.
- Adjustments to median placements in the vicinity of the Fire Station and north of Dover Street could be made in order to accommodate the needs of the Fire Department.

Fred Hatch cautioned that there could be unintended consequences associated with the roundabout system. Fred noted what he believed to be additional eastbound truck traffic on Pease Road due to their desire to avoid the roundabout at US Route 3 and NH Route 106. Fred believes the additional traffic on Pease Road continues onto Winona Road, Waukegan Road, US Route 3, NH Route 25 B and back to NH Route 25 in Center Harbor. Fred expressed concern that the use of this bypass route could be increased if more roundabouts were added to the downtown. Lou suggested the additional traffic on Pease Road could be from trucks heading west wishing to avoid Meredith Center Road.

US Route 3/ NH Route 104. Gene advised that while the focus has been between Lake Street and Pleasant Street, the current study area also includes US Route 3 south of Lake Street up to and including the US Route 3/ NH Route 104 intersection. Although improvements along this stretch are beyond the limit of existing funding, Gene suggested it was worthwhile to identify future improvements at a conceptual level and have included in the NEPA review. Gene presented some information from Part A that included: (A) additional roundabouts and median strips, (B) a two lane roundabout and signalization alternatives for the US Route 3 and NH Route 104 intersection, and (C) a three lane section in this area consisting of one thru lane in each direction plus a center turn lane for left turning traffic. Members expressed their desire to keep the focus on the 3-roundabout system believing that we should have experience with the downtown improvements first before anything else is committed to. There was discussion about the replacement of the bridge on US Route 3 and potential alternative scenarios at the intersection. There were no objections to a three lane section noting that the center turn lane may improve access to businesses along US Route 3.

Points for Possible Discussion. The committee reviewed a draft handout prepared by Chairman Kahn entitled 3/25 Advisory Committee Points for Possible Discussion dated 12/4/14. Chairman Kahn called for any thoughts, corrections, additions, etc. It was the consensus of the committee

that the draft was acceptable and that it should be made available together with the 3 roundabout graphic. Lou indicated that he and MFJ will make the presentation to the Board of Selectmen at the January public hearing. Lou said he would be scheduling meetings with civic groups and organizations to explain the proposal.

Next Meeting. The public hearing before the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for January 26, 2015. Lou asked committee members to keep January 15, 2015 open for a possible meeting, if necessary, depending on the outcome of Phil's meeting with department heads.

With no further business to come before the committee, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:44 PM.

DRAFT