



**Milton US7 Corridor Study  
Public Meeting #1 (Local Concerns Meeting) Notes**

**DATE:** Monday, October 6, 2014  
**TIME:** 6:00 PM  
**PLACE:** Presentation before the Milton Selectboard and Planning Commission, Milton Municipal Building, 83 Bombardier Road, Milton  
**PRESENT:** Please see end of document

The Selectboard Chair, Darren Adams, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The Selectboard completed other agenda items and began item VI.B) US 7 Corridor Study Presentation and Public Comment at 6:06 PM.

Brian Palaia, the Milton Town Manager, introduced Jason Charest of the CCRPC who explained the purpose of the meeting is to get input from municipal officials and the public about issues and concerns along the US7 corridor. Jason introduced Joe Barr and Andrew Smith of Parsons Brinckerhoff, the study's consultants, who made a presentation featuring the Existing Conditions. The presentation will be available at: <http://bit.ly/milton-us7>.

***Study Background***

Joe Barr explained that the study began in June. Since then, the Advisory Committee has met twice and the consultant team has completed a field visit. The study will take place over ten to twelve months and include four advisory committee meetings and three public meetings.

The corridor is a three-mile stretch from Forbes Road to Main Street along US Route 7. Joe described the corridor as a fast-growing one in search of an identity. The high school is a major auto, bus, and bike/pedestrian traffic generator. There is strong interest in developing alternatives to US7 such as "backage"/bypass road paralleling the corridor.

This study is a high-level one that will advance the development and evaluation of traffic and bike/pedestrian improvements, with the following broad goals: 1) Reduce congestion and improve traffic flow; 2) Accommodate future travel demands and population growth; 3) Improve safety; 4) Accommodate all travel modes; and 5) Use transportation improvements to provide visual identity for corridor. All of these goals are to be accomplished by building upon previously-completed studies and following VTrans access management policies.

***Existing Conditions***

Andrew Smith summarized the existing conditions. US7 is Milton's functional Main Street and is zoned for future development growth. There has been significant development of multifamily housing that can create traffic congestion due to limited alternate access. In terms of jobs, more Milton residents travel to work outside of Milton than any other community in Northwest Vermont. Milton is classified as an "urban cluster" according to the 2010 Census. The highest traffic volumes in the corridor are seen at US7 near Lamoille Terrace (high school entrance) with an average of 14,000 vehicles per day.

As for traffic congestion, Andrew noted issues at US7 and Hannaford Plaza during PM peak, level of service “F” at Hayden Berry Drive approach to US7 during PM peak, and congestion at Main Street associated with Husky shifts and at Lamoille Terrace associated with the high school. For transit, Andrew summarized the CCTA routes and noted that NECR passes through Milton at Railroad Avenue. He also summarized the bicycle/pedestrian environment and highlighted safety concerns for all modes.

Andrew discussed specific issues in four corridor sections: 1) Forbes Road to Checkerberry Village; 2) Legion Road to Willys Lane; 3) Willys Lane to Lamoille Terrace; and 4) Lamoille Terrace to Main Street.

The floor was opened to Questions and Comments.

### ***Questions and Comments***

Darren Adams: Will we have a comparison of future traffic congestion with and without the new hourglass configuration at US7/Middle Road/Railroad Street intersection? Jason/Joe: We plan to include the hourglass in the future conditions since it is the alternative being pursued. Rather than duplicating the effort, we can include the previous analysis in our plan.

John Gifford: Your slide shows the traffic volume in front of the high school as 14-15,000 cars, but that isn’t consistent with the traffic volumes on either side of the school. Joe: This information is very high level VTrans planning data. The traffic data that we will use for the analysis is based on actual counts done by the CCRPC.

John Gifford: You mentioned the pedestrian activated crossing at the new Hannaford’s entrance. What can we do to have traffic move better through this intersection? Andrew: The activation requires that all approaches stop when a pedestrian pushes the button. This is very safe for the pedestrian, but traffic backs up. It’s possible to allow some traffic to proceed or tweak the signal timing. We’ll know more when we complete further analysis.

Mike Thompson: There is a sidewalk on Route 7 down toward Richie Avenue. Andrew: Yes, there is a sidewalk on the east side of Route 7 from Barnum Avenue to Main Street, but not on the west side; ideally, sidewalks are on both sides of the street. Mike Thompson: You need to look at the school counts when school is in session and when it is not. Andrew: We are considering an additional count to address traffic during the school day and how it would affect our traffic model.

Stuart King: When will there be study results and will it detail highway improvements? Joe: The study will be completed in the spring. It will include an implementation plan with roles, responsibilities, preliminary costs, and a timeline. Jason: The recommended improvements will depend on how the corridor develops. The study will show a future developer the town’s vision and goals for the corridor. The study may recommend additional detailed scoping studies. Joe: The study can also assist with the new “fair share” effort spearheaded by VTrans (Transportation Improvement Districts).

Bill Dailey: Ed Robinson and I own the quarry. When we were here to talk about Exit 17, the Selectboard asked about a proposed Exit 17A. We were told a new exit would not be built. How does the Selectboard feel about Exit 17A now? Should it be included in this study? Jason: An analysis of Route 7 south of West Milton Road will be done as part of this study and determine how it will operate in the future. We'll try to determine at what point additional capacity is needed – a new interchange, improvements to Route 7 south, or other solutions. We expect to provide a timeframe for significant improvements. Darren Adams: I think 17A is a great idea, but there hasn't been an interchange built since the interstate was finished. I think it's nearly impossible to think the State is going to change its philosophy and built a new interchange. John Bartlett: There are funds for existing interchanges, like the new Exit 17 bridge, but there isn't funding for new interchanges. John Gifford: If we didn't have to replace the Exit 17 bridge, it would make a lot of sense to build Exit 17A.

Lou Mossey: If development continues in the Checkerberry area, we will lose our chance to build 17A. Colchester will be developing the Exit 17 area regardless of what Milton does. We need to think about what is right for us based on our needs. We need to be careful about letting development encroach on land needed for a possible 17A.

Mary Jane Stintson: We are trying to increase the ability for students to walk and bike to school. The sidewalk breaks are challenging for students. John Gifford: a signalized intersection or a pedestrian-activated signal at Barnum Street/Lamoille Terrace would go a long way to improving school access.

Henry Bonges: I bike on Route 7 from West Milton Road near the Birchwood Mobile Home Park. There are a lot of pedestrians in this area and there isn't a shoulder much less a sidewalk. This is the number one concern for bike/pedestrian safety. Darren Adams: When is the West Milton overpass due for an overhaul? Andrew: We'll ask VTrans.

Darren Adams: Will your study identify responsibilities in terms of bike lanes and sidewalks? Milton doesn't have the ability to add bike lanes to a state route, but we are responsible for sidewalks. Andrew: We can include jurisdictional responsibility in our report.

Amy Cook: I would like a multimodal path on Route 7. I serve on the Route 7 aesthetics improvement committee. We discussed this at length at our last meeting.

John Gifford: I would like a pedestrian signal at Barnum Street like the one they have at the school on Blakely Road in Colchester.

Darren Adams: My personal opinion is that biking in Vermont, other than in Burlington and Winooski, is recreational not a mode of transportation.

Bill Kaigle: I'm part of a group to save General Stannard's house near the Catamount Industrial park (across from Charlebois). One possible repurpose is as a bicycle rest stop. I'd like to have it included in the study as a possibility on Route 7.

### ***Next Steps***

December 2014: Advisory Committee Meeting #3 - Presentation of future condition, vision and goals, potential strategies, and evaluation process  
January 2015: Public Meeting #2  
April 2015: Public Meeting #3  
June 2015: Final Report Completed

The Milton US7 agenda item was completed at 7:04 PM.

### **Study Contacts:**

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Joe Barr, NE Planning Enviro./Traffic Lead, Parsons Brinckerhoff, 617-960-4862, [barrje@pbworld.com](mailto:barrje@pbworld.com)

### **Participants**

**Milton Selectboard:** John Bartlett, John Gifford, Darren Adams (Chair), Brenda Steady, Stuart King.  
**Milton Planning Commission:** Henry Bonges, Lori Donna (Chair, also an AC Member), Tony Micklus, Julie Rutz  
**Advisory Committee:** Bill Dailey (Business), Kym Duchesneau (Recreation Coordinator), Robert Hall (VTrans), Roger Hunt (DPW Director), Ann Janda, Brian Palaia (Town Manager), Katherine Sonnick (Planning Director), Mary Jane Stintson (Elementary Principal), Don Turner (Fire & Rescue Chief), Brett Van Noordt (Police Chief)  
**Other Milton Staff:** Erik Wells (HR)  
**Members of the Public:** Gisela Alpert, Amy Cook, Bob Fleming, Bill Kaigle, Dustin Keelty, Courtney Lamden (Milton Independent), Jay Mitiguy, Lou Mossey, Edward Robinson, Jennifer Taylor, Mike Thompson, Terry Rushard, Colleen Souve  
**CCRPC Staff:** Jason Charest, Lee Krohn  
**Consultant Team:** Joe Barr and Andrew Smith, Parsons Brinckerhoff; Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates