



**Milton US 7 Corridor Study  
 Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Notes**

DATE: Monday, September 22, 2014  
 TIME: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM  
 PLACE: Milton Municipal Building Community Room

**Members/Alternates Present:**

Rachel Beauregard, VTrans District 5  
 Bill Dailey, Business Representative  
 Ed DeMott, Dept. of Health, Burlington  
 Lori Donna, Milton Planning Comm./ED Comm.  
 Kym Duchesneau, Milton Recreation Coord.  
 Rob Hall, VTrans  
 Jacob Hemmerick, Milton Town Planner  
 Roger Hunt, Milton DPW Director  
 Amy Malinowski, Dept. of Health, Burlington  
 Bruce Nyquist, VTrans  
 Brian Palaia, Milton Town Manager  
 Katherine Sonnick, Milton Planning Director

Mary Jane Stintson, Milton Elementary  
 Brett Van Noordt, Milton Police Chief

**Others Present:**

Ann Janda, Town of Milton  
 Edward Robinson, Landowner

**Staff/Consultants Present:**

Joe Barr, Parsons Brinckerhoff  
 Jason Charest, CCRPC  
 Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Assoc.  
 Andrew Smith, Parsons Brinckerhoff

**1) Changes to the Agenda:** There were none.

**2) Welcome & Introductions**

Jason Charest of the CCRPC welcomed the group and introductions were made. Jason welcomed Ed DeMott and Amy Malinowski of the Vermont Department of Health in Burlington. They will be conducting a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of the corridor. Amy explained that an HIA is a process that ascertains, in a scientific way, the health impacts of a policy or planning decision. Ed will be collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, including focus groups of Milton citizens.

**3) Updates: Activity to Date** (The presentation is available at:

<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/transportation/corridors/milton-us-7-corridor-study/advisory-committee/>)

Joe Barr of Parsons Brinckerhoff reminded the group that the first Advisory Committee meeting was held in June. Since then, the consultant team has completed a field visit and the CCRPC has collected traffic data. The study will take place over ten to twelve months and include four advisory committee meetings and three public meetings.

The corridor stretches 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 roads 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<sup>1</sup> and following VTrans Category 6 (Urban) access management policies.

#### **4) Existing Conditions**

Andrew Smith of Parsons Brinckerhoff summarized the existing conditions. US 7 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 and the population is expected to nearly double by 2035. 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.

For traffic congestion, Andrew noted issues at US 7 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.

#### **5) Process for Future Conditions Assessment**

Joe noted that the next step is the Future Conditions Assessment which will estimate growth rates by applying planned development projects to the CCRPC travel demand model for 2035. CCRPC will also perform more extensive travel analysis of the entire corridor during AM and PM peak periods.

Lori Donna of the Milton Planning Commission asked about build-out analysis. Jason responded that development projections are included in the regional transportation model and he's been comparing the projections to the town's growth expectations. Lori noted that the town has seen more residential development, especially multi-family, than they had expected. She also wants to be sure that traffic data is current and includes the new Hannaford Plaza. Jason will check; he can add a factor if necessary to account for recent changes. Jacob Hemmerick, Town Planner, asked that the High Crash Location (HCL) data be as current as possible, and was surprised Landfill Road and Southerberry Drive was not identified as a HCL. Roger Hunt, DPW Director, noted heavy congestion on Gimlet Hill between 7:00-8:30AM.

Joe discussed possible development goals, including to develop a "main street" identity along US7, enhance the bicycle/pedestrian network, policies to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and to address environmental quality and sustainability.

During discussion, Jacob noted that the pedestrian traffic is equal in the north and south parts of the corridor, outside of school arrival and departure windows.

Bill Daily of the business community noted the spring flooding on US7 south of the dam which

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<sup>1</sup> US7/Middle Road/Railroad Street Intersection Scoping Report (Mar 2013), Vermont Western Corridor Transportation Management Plan (Feb 2010), Milton High School Access Improvements Project Definition Report (Aug 2004).

inhibits bicycle and pedestrian use. He would like to see the flooding addressed in the study. Roger noted storm drain and drainage issues are present throughout the corridor. Joe suggested the study highlight the safety, operations, and environmental quality issues related to flooding. Rachel Beauregard of VTrans has been examining the storm drains and most are at river level; changing the river level is very difficult. Roger noted that a 2013 UVM Capstone group recommended extending the sidewalk near the hill, including stormwater improvements and a rain garden.

Bruce Nyquist of VTrans suggested the consultants contact Jon Kaplan at VTrans who is rewriting the crosswalk guidelines. Jacob suggested checking vehicle speeds near Checkerberry Village; the speeds may make a strong argument for pedestrian crossing improvements.

Katherine Sonnick, Planning Director, noted the town has discussed a sidewalk on West Milton Road to allow Birchwood residents to walk safely to Checkerberry Village. Bill sees a lot of bike/pedestrian/motorized wheelchair traffic over the Interstate bridge. There is no sidewalk and the lighting is poor.

There is a scoping study for a multiuse path at Haydenberry and the high school. The town is interested in multiuse paths separated from the roadway to broaden the user base. Mary Jane Stintson, Principal of the Elementary School, noted that the school is involved with Safe Routes to School, but they are limited due to their location between US7 and the railroad tracks.

Bill Dailey noted that Exit 17A was studied (in 1987) and concluded that the solution was northbound ramps located at the top of the hill on Route 7 (south of the car wash). Southbound ramps would be located on West Milton Road.

## **6) Next Steps**

The first public meeting will be held on **October 6, 2014 at 6:00PM** at the Municipal Building. It is co-hosted by the Selectboard and Planning Commission. The meeting will feature an introduction to the study, corridor issues, and existing conditions. Diane Meyerhoff of Third Sector Associates reviewed the outreach plan, including an ad in the Milton Independent, Front Porch Forum postings, calendar listings, media advisory, and flyers. She will send information to the Advisory Committee and asked that they spread the word.

There was a discussion of new legislation that requires developers to pay their “fair share” of new infrastructure costs (Transportation Improvement Districts). Corridor studies are important because they allow municipalities to provide a clear plan for their communities and will help to assess fair share costs. This is especially important in Milton where many small developments have a large impact on traffic congestion.

## **Upcoming Meetings**

**October 6, 2014:** Local Concerns Public Meeting

**December 2014:** Advisory Committee Meeting #3 - Presentation of future condition, vision and goals, potential strategies, and evaluation process

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 AM.

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