

Public Meeting Notes

Rt. 116 Corridor Study

Hinesburg Town Hall 9/24/13, 7:00-9:00

Introduction by Alex Wienhagen

- Brief introduction to the corridor study
- Context within the previous 116 corridor study (2004) that used data gathered in the late 1990s
- Elements of the plan that were implemented i.e. Silver Street intersection
- Of about 20 attendees at the meeting, 1/3 live in the village center; almost all drive through on Rt. 116

Presentation by Lucy Gibson

Topics included description of a corridor study, outcomes of last Hinesburg corridor study, and a review of data on existing conditions from the corridor on transportation for all modes, land uses, growth trends, and safety. The following questions and concerns were expressed during the presentation:

- Concerns raised about the Hannaford project
- PM peak hour traffic affected by drivers letting each other go - not reflected in the models
- Clarify LOS refers to vehicles in this case
- Concerns about Level of Service as an accurate measure of the quality and condition of Hinesburg's streets - not just trying to move cars efficiently
- Congestion is limited almost exclusively to rush hour
- How does 11,000 AADT compare to neighboring towns
- Traffic lights increase aggressive driving as opposed to blinking red lights
- Higher density in Village could be contributing to congestion and causes safety issues with younger children crossing the road
- We need to balance the needs of pedestrians and cars, but they have conflicting goals; vehicle travel time is a quality of life issue
- Traffic congestion is jeopardizing Hinesburg's future, especially with the added development
- Congestion can easily worsen in the future

Following the presentation, specific issues regarding the corridor were solicited. The following lists the issues grouped by topic rather than in the exact chronological order.

Walkability

- Walking through village to CVU can't be done legally because there are no crosswalks
- There should be a pedestrian crosswalk at Mechanicsville Rd across 116
- Walking to Public House up Mechanicsville; can't cross Route 116 legally (it was clarified that it is not illegal to cross the road, but there is not a crosswalk provided to guide pedestrians to the safest crossing place).
- Look at the unconventional ways in which people travel through town i.e. footpaths
- Walking from village to library should be possible

- Density is a good thing, resident lives in Lyman Meadows, benefits of proximity and walking to various destinations
- How about complete streets, creative solutions?
- Look for innovative ways to improve 116 and focus on walkability/livability

West Side Road

- Is the project actually feasible?
- Reluctance on behalf of the land owners but it is needed, especially in light of future development in the northwest portion of town
- The easiest part to complete is the northern terminus of the road
- There is also a portion of it being built during the next phase of a development to the south
- The issue is connecting them; there are some environmental concerns, wetlands, and some neighbors would rather not see a new road
- Also it needs to bisect large parcel
- The purpose is not a bypass road
- See west side road feasibility study - 2002?
- How about West side road south of Charlotte Rd to Silver Street? off the table
- Big believer in west side road
- Should be a bypass, get traffic off of 116 that is heading for Burlington

Safety

- Bike and pedestrian safety crossing at Silver St and 116, especially after sidewalk construction
- Consider pedestrian lights - south Burlington example where sidewalk goes into a school parking lot
- Pedestrians crossing more than two lanes have problems, especially elderly
- Needs to be pedestrian refuges for safer crossings

Congestion

- Vermont is behind the curve on traffic congestion and should learn from our mistakes
- See us duplicating the blunders of other cities around the country by adding turn lanes and signals etc.
- Worried that there is a box we think in and need to think outside of; don't shy away from radical solutions, give alternative forms of transportation a serious chance
- Concerns with how congested Commerce St and 116 intersection will become
- Make Mechanicsville Rd between commerce and 116 one way and possibly signalized
- Monkton traffic — different option to access to CVU rd./Shelburne rd.

Projections/Models

- Would like to see some more concrete projections and models for the next 20-30 years
- Population AND traffic models because the two are interrelated; population will have a direct impact on traffic congestion
- Make sure we account for those not commuting and are driving to destinations within Hinesburg- look at Taft Corners, no one lives there but it is congested. How will this number grow if a business like Hannaford were to be located in Hinesburg?
- Lucy: models distinguish between the two

- Sai: number of trips generated and pass-by trips by type of employment are accounted in the model. they are able to account for this from a regional perspective

Parking

- If we want the village green to function as one, shouldn't we have more off street parking? A municipal parking lot would make it easier to find parking than looking for on street spaces
- Alex: a lot had been proposed but needs to be looked at closer to determine the actual need for such a facility

School traffic

- Traffic issues from both schools - we need to coordinate with the schools and see what kind of strategies we can implement i.e. increased school bus ridership
- During peak morning traffic when school is not in session there is no congestion (school vacation)
- Some can't afford to drive their children to school each day
- Current route is inefficient i.e. students who live a mile away may get picked up an hour early
- Explore other routes
- In light of population growth, how about separating the middle school and the high school
- Alex: demographically having less kids, not much immigration thus no foreseeable need to separate schools
- Enrollment has fluctuated, frustrates administration
- Charlotte's population is dropping significantly, talks of a possible regional school

Signalization

- Silver St and 116 should be signalized, is dysfunctional in current state
- Explore different signal timing for different times of the day

Town character

- Moved to Hinesburg because it is small quaint town; we can't make the town an extension of South Burlington
- Reinforce the reason we came here, retain small town feel, efforts should focus on that

Constraints/obstacles

- Hydrology/geology of village may constrain these innovative solutions
- What if Hinesburg took ownership of 116? Could the study look into this and possibly provide a cost estimate?
- Alex: cost biggest obstacle, pros and cons will be evaluated.
- Look at underground utilities in relation to street trees so that trees are not impacted each time there is construction