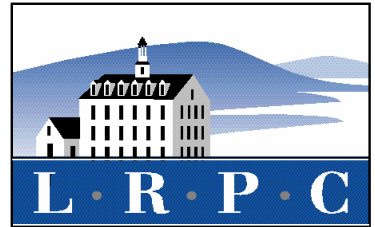


LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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Minutes of July 30, 2009 NH Route 28 Corridor Safety Audit Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting Chichester Town Hall, Chichester, NH

PRESENT:

Alton

Kenneth Roberts, Highway Agent

Barnstead

David Kerr, Selectman
David Murley, Planning Board
Bill Evans, Health Officer

Chichester

No representatives present

Pittsfield

Gary Johnson, Fire Department
Robert Wharem, Police Department

Epsom

Betsy Bosiak, Planning Board

NH DOT

Donald Lyford, Project Manager
Bill O'Donnell, District V Maintenance
Trent Zanes, Preliminary Design

Regional Planning Commissions

Rodrigo Marion, Principal Transportation
Planner, CNHRPC
Craig Tufts, Transportation/GIS Planner,
CNHRPC
Michael Izard, Principal Planner, LRPC
Adam Hlasny, Assistant Planner, LRPC

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB)

Greg Bakos, Senior Highway Engineer
Robin Bousa, Project Manager

Others

Sharon Patterson, Prospect Mtn High School
Fred Hast, Pittsfield Selectman
Beth Odell, Pittsfield resident
Allen Mayville, Chichester Planning Board
Gwen & Paul Adams, Chichester residents
Brendan Berube, Reporter, *The Baysider*

1 Call to Order

Michael Izard of Lakes Region Planning Commission called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 pm. All in attendance were provided the opportunity to introduce themselves.

2 Existing Land Use and Potential Future Land Use Recommendations

Craig Tufts of Central NH Regional Planning Commission gave a brief presentation regarding land use in the corridor. He explained that the importance of conducting a land

use study is to anticipate and plan for what development might come, and take advantage of the opportunity to shape what's coming. Management of curb cuts, he said, is of paramount importance to controlling access, and therefore safety, on a state highway such as 28. He discussed several potential recommendations for land use and aesthetics, including access management, lighting, landscaping, signage, cluster development, application of existing regulations, and other ways to maximize the efficiency and appearance of the roadway.

K. Roberts asked on which sections of state highway is access management controlled by the state, and on which by municipality. It was determined that the key to successful access management is the coordination and cooperation between municipalities and DOT. Questions for DOT arose about maintenance and who pays the cost of updating signs, electricity for lighting, pavement markings, and other items. It was stated that Bill Lambert would be contacted for additional information. M. Izard added that now, in a time of economic uncertainty, is also an opportune time to conduct proactive planning, so that when the economy recovers and development begins to increase, there are plans in place to prepare for this development.

3 Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB) Safety Assessment Preliminary Findings

Greg Bakos explained to those present the purpose of VHB's study- to give a "second look" at the findings of the Corridor Advisory Committee, and to add value to the solutions found. He also stated that VHB's purpose is not to dictate the necessary improvements, but rather to guide and make recommendations. Bakos began the presentation by referencing VHB's corridor-wide observations. These included pavement edge drop-offs, hazards in clear zone, street name signs, sporadic lighting, encroaching roadside vegetation, guardrail end treatments, side street pavement markings, etc. Low-cost solutions include widening shoulders, maintaining the clear zone, adding rumble strips, delineation on curves, and roadway lighting.

K. Roberts expressed enthusiasm for rumble strips and their effects on roadway safety. D. Kerr added that a centerline rumble strip might be the way to go in the narrower Alton/Barnstead section of Route 28. G. Bakos pointed out that the downside of rumble strips is the noise created in residential areas.

G. Bakos then summarized VHB's findings on the "lower priority intersections," which include Kelly Corner Road, Concord Hill Road, Leavitt Road, NH Route 126, Colony Drive, Prospect Mountain Road, and Lot Line Road.

VHB continued by giving detailed results from their studies of the "higher priority intersections," in order from south to north. Many locations sparked discussion among those in attendance. VHB recommended closing up some of the access points on the Epsom Traffic Circle, which was met with general agreement.

For Main Street in Chichester, several possible remedies were discussed for the current poorly functioning intersection. These included a roundabout, right-hand turn lane on northbound NH Route 28, and decreasing speed limits on NH Route 28 and Main Street.

For the NH Route 107/NH Route 28 intersection in Pittsfield, fixing the negatively offset turn lanes on NH 28 could reduce crashes by 30-40%, according to VHB. Police Chief

Robert Wharem mentioned that there are, on average, 5-6 near misses per day at this intersection.

For the Maple Street intersection in Barnstead, the need for a crosswalk was discussed due to the high volume of pedestrians coming and going from the elementary school. A crosswalk across NH 28 would, however, pose a safety hazard, as traffic often travels 45-50 mph along this stretch. It was generally agreed upon to leave NH 28 as it is in this section due to the dynamics of the road and the potential for unsafe pedestrian activity.

For Peacham Road, G. Bakos said that most deficiencies at this intersection were due to geometry and narrow shoulders. An improvement of horizontal and vertical alignment would undoubtedly improve safety. Roadway lighting was also mentioned as a short-term, cost-effective improvement. T. Zanes of DOT said that \$1.25 million is set aside for 7-mile stretch of NH Route 28 between the Alton traffic circle and Barnstead project in 2010, and \$3.5 million in 2015.

At North Barnstead/North Roads, the addition of street lighting and movement of the drainage headwall would be two significant improvements, before the ultimate fix of redoing the intersection's profile. Locals have observed drivers "jug-handling," or using North Road as a turnaround to make the left turn (heading southbound on NH 28) onto North Barnstead Road.

For Stockbridge Road in Alton, VHB suggested either narrowing down or closing off the cutoff road from NH 28 northbound to reduce driver confusion and incidents.

A resident mentioned the dangers of living on Kelly Corner Road, and the potential hazards of the 90-unit development being built on Pleasant Street, which intersects Kelly Corner.

VHB said they are currently working on interviews with police and fire departments in towns where crash data are unavailable. Sometimes local information can be even more valuable than state accident information.

4 Project Next Steps

M. Izard explained to those present that VHB will write a memorandum detailing their findings by August 7. This memo will be consolidated with other meeting information to produce a final study report. The last committee meeting was scheduled for Thursday, August 20, from 2:00-4:00 pm at a location to be determined in Chichester or Barnstead. At this meeting there will be a draft report to be presented to the public, with revisions to the report due by August 31, and a final version presented to town select boards in early September. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:18 pm.