

3-25 Advisory Committee

Meeting

<http://www.meredithnh.org/>

~ Minutes ~

Phillip Warren
6032794538

Thursday, March 27, 2014

3:00 PM

Town Hall Annex

1. AGENDA

Members in Attendance:

Jack Carty, Greater Meredith Program Rep.

Rusty McLearn, Greater Meredith Program Rep. (alternate)

Lou Kahn, Board of Selectmen Rep.

Liz Lapham, Planning Board Rep.

Warren Clark

Sandra Sullivan

L. Michael Hatch

Fred Hatch

Phil Warren, Town Manager

John Edgar, Community Development Director

Others Present:

Don Lyford, Project Manager, NHDOT

John Butler, NHDOT,

Susan Soucie, NHDOT

Cathy Goodmen, NHDOT

Gene McCarthy, Project Manager, McFarland Johnson

Jeff Santacruce, McFarland Johnson

David Saladino, Resource Systems Group (RSG)

Ben Swanson, Resource Systems Group (RSG)

Mike Kitch, Laconia Daily Sun

The March 27, 2014 meeting of the US Route 3/ NH Route 25 Advisory Committee was held at the Town Hall Annex. The meeting was brought to order at 3:00 pm by Phil Warren, Town Manager.

A. *Orginazation*

Phil indicated that the committee is a sub-committee of the Board of Selectmen. As such the work of the committee is subject to the provisions of RSA 91-A. Phil asked John Edgar to take the meeting minutes.

Committee members and others present were introduced.

Phil indicated that the first order of business is for the committee to elect its chairman. Phil called for nominations. Lou Kahn was nominated. Phil called for any additional nominations. There were none. Phil called for a vote on the nomination of Lou Kahn as chairman. All voted in favor.

B. *Discussion of project*

Chairman Kahn asked Don Lyford, NHDOT Project Manager and Gene McCarthy, Project Manager for MFJ to proceed with their presentation. Don indicated that NHDOT was looking to the committee for input and that Part B would pick up where Part A left off with the goal of coming to a preferred alternative. Gene provided an overview of the agenda and identified the project team. A series of slides were reviewed and discussed. The slides summarized Project Development Process, the Project Problem Statement, the Project Vision Statement, part A Project Limits, Part A Range of Alternatives, Part A Alternatives Screening, Range of Reasonable Alternatives and Part B Objectives.

Chairman Kahn noted that as a subcommittee of the Board of Selectmen the committee will be making recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and that at some point in the process the Board of Selectmen will conduct a public hearing. Chairman Kahn further noted that the Town of Meredith would not be spending any money on this project.

The committee reviewed and discussed the Public Involvement Plan dated March 2014. Gene mentioned that project has a web page (www.meredith3-25.com) that will be used to track the project and to communicate with the public. The project is also on Facebook. Fred hatch encouraged the NHDOT to make the web site as navigable as possible. Don Lyford asked if the committee had a preference regarding their e-mail addresses being published on the web site. It was the consensus of the committee that e-mail addresses will be shown on the website without there being a live link to reduce the chance of spam.

Gene noted that the decision making process would operate by consensus whenever possible. The committee discussed the requirements for approval of an action absent a consensus. The Public Involvement Plan called for a super majority of three- quarters (75%). It was the consensus of the committee to change that requirement to a two-thirds majority. The Public Involvement Plan will be amended to reflect this change.

Gene reviewed the Part B Project limits that had been reduced from the Part A scope. Part B now includes only the village core. There was discussion regarding whether to include the NH Route 104/US 3 intersection within the project limits. The committee decided to hold off for now on making any decision to further reduce to study area. The emphasis on Part B is to identify the Preferred Alternative. This will include the development of a formal Purpose and Need Statement, traffic modeling, alternatives refinement, cost estimates, assessment of resource impacts, screening and prioritization. This process results in a public hearing with the emphasis being on the environmental impacts (Categorical Exclusion) of the Preferred Alternative. A Project Schedule was viewed. It was noted that briefings to the Board of Selectmen and their public hearing could be added to the schedule. Members of the committee indicated a desire to keep the project moving at a fast pace and that the committee could meet whenever the project team is ready and available.

Gene reviewed the Range of Reasonable Alternatives that resulted from Part A including two bypass options; the Pleasant Street Bypass and the School Bypass. Gene noted that the regulatory agencies were not in favor of either of these options due to environmental concerns. There was discussion regarding the cost to construct either of these options in relation to the amount available for the project. It was noted that Hawkins Brook has been un-designated as a Prime Wetland and that the Village Pathways Committee is working on a proposal to construct a trail in and around the Hawkins Brook area.

Gene reviewed the particulars of the Intermediate Alternative- Three Lane Section and the Roundabout Alternative. The driver for both of these alternatives is what type and level of improvement should occur at the US Route 3/ NH Route 25 intersection. Dave Saladino of RSG provided a summary of an updated traffic analysis focusing on the performance of roundabout options. The analysis was based on updated summer peak traffic counts and calibrated modeling for Friday and Sunday Peak periods.

The committee viewed an animation of the various modeled scenarios. There was considerable discussion regarding the pros and cons associated with a one lane roundabout versus a two lane roundabout.

It was suggested that further roundabout configuration adjustments be considered in order to improve performance and minimize right-of-way impacts. Gene will look into this and have RSG model the effects. RSG will also model the effect of pedestrian signals on roundabout performance. RSG provided graphic illustration of when the intersection exceeds capacity and how that compares to a single lane roundabout.

It was noted that the Police Department currently manages traffic flow with employees at key intersections during peak periods in addition to cones at Pleasant Street. The traffic cones effectively allow for left turns onto NH Route 25. Fred suggested that NHDOT get updated pedestrian counts in the context of the traffic control now employed by the Town during busy weekends.

There was discussion regarding project budget limitations and how the economics will drive prioritization of improvements. Don Lyford indicated that the amount currently allocated for construction was approximately \$5-\$6 mil. Don noted that if the estimated costs exceed the current allocation, there is the potential to seek additional funding.

Gene noted that at the next meeting the committee will work on a Purpose and Need Statement and continue to work on the preferred alternative.

2. Adjournment

The next meeting of the committee was tentatively set for April 23, 2014 at 3:00 PM. The town manager will check on the availability of the larger meeting room at the Community Center. A meeting notice will be sent out to confirm date, time and meeting location.

With no further business to come before the Committee, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 5:30 PM.