



CITY OF DOVER

DOVER PLANNING BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Council Chambers
Meeting Date: Tuesday, August 10, 2010
Meeting Time: 7:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron Cole (Chair), Frank Torr (Vice Chair), Dean Trefethen, Linda Merullo, Marcia Gasses, Lee Skinner (Alternate), Tom Clark, Jake Forget (Alternate)

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: John Swartzendruber, Gary Green, Doug Steele

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Parker (Planning), Lisa Ertle (Recording Secretary)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7pm. As an Alternate, Lee Skinner stood in for John Swartzendruber, and Jake Forget stood in for Doug Steele.

1. CITIZENS' FORUM – NOBODY SPOKE

Chair noted there is not a public hearing format for Item 4B, and the NHDOT is here to discuss their application for a roundabout. Public hearing will be open for NHDOT project, and would like all questions or statements be in reference to the Roundabout.

Ray Bardwell, 199 Spur Rd, feels the layout of the current roads in Dover meets City demands, and there is no need for rehabilitation. The money could go to other projects. He described an analysis he concluded personally of the on ramps, and current lanes of highway, and does not and feel there is backup problems.

Karen Weston, 42 French Cross, noted she is concerned about the amount of traffic lights being added to this area. She would like the Board to take into consideration the approaches, the roundabout, and amount of traffic the 3 proposed lights will have. She noted that at the Traffic Advisory Commission meeting there was a concern with the amount of traffic that would overflow the roundabout.

2. APPROVAL OF THE PRIOR MINUTES

- June 27, 2010 Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: F.Torr motioned to approve the June 27, 2010 Meeting Minutes. D.Andolina seconded. Vote: Unanimous

D.Trefethen asked what was updated from the previously submitted Meeting Minutes. C.Parker noted there was a clerical error on page 7 in regards to conditions to be met for K9 Kaos.

L.Skinner addressed the Conditions of Approval written on page 8 of 9, and asked if Condition 10 is still a condition to be met. C.Parker noted the sign is not part of the conditions, and will be removed.

3. OLD BUSINESS



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4. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Consideration and acceptance of a Conditional Use Application for Diane Dewyngaert & John Penaskovic, Assessor's Map G, Lot 14-A, zoned R-12, located on 346 Washington Street. (Culvert Construction)
(P10-37)

T.Clark noted that he will step down, to avoid any conflicts, due to working with both the applicants and abutters in his past position with the Planning Board.

C.Parker noted he will be representing the applicant. The stream restoration involves the current applicant and two other direct abutters. He described the history of the Streambed Restoration project, including work with the NHDES. The current application is a continuation of an application from a previous applicant, whom came before the board in June, which was a conditional use permit to restore the streambed, and remove a culvert for the sewer line that crossed their property line. Tonight's applicants will be installing a culvert of proper size, moving their driveway further North, and constructing an efficient and sound system for the flowage of the project. The focus is to get a culvert in place, and address the piping concerns. He noted the applicant has worked with the downstream abutting neighbor, the second parcel abutters, and now wants to work with the third property owner to be in line with restoration. The Restoration Plan Agreement is on file, and they are working with Collis Adams the head of the Wetland Bureau. The owners of this application are present and willing to speak. M.Gasses noted the Conversation Commission approved this case at the August 9, 2010 Conservation Commission meeting.

D.Trefethen noted the size of a proposed culvert that was visited on an August 4 site walk, compared to the culvert in this plan. He asked if the size of this culvert is to handle a storm. C.Parker noted that he has talked with the City Engineer, and he feels this will be more efficient and work properly. Current conditions do not work properly, and when the dam and pond are clarified the downstream effects will be handled. He discussed the reasons that constitute the size of this culvert. D.Trefethen noted he agrees that we need to do something about this as soon as possible, and asked if this has been signed off by NHDES. C.Parker confirmed that it has, they got the approval before the project was brought to the Board.

Motion: M.Gasses motioned to accept the application. F.Torr seconded. Vote: Unanimous

Public Hearing Opened-Nobody Spoke-Public Hearing Closed

C.Parker noted the Planning Department recommends the Planning Board approve the Conditional Use Permit application with the following condition:

Conditions to Be Met Prior to Signing of Plans:

1. The applicant shall provide the Planning Department with a copy of the NH Department of Environmental Services Wetland Permit.



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Vote: Unanimous

B. Public Information Session by NHDOT for proposed design of a roundabout located at Boston Harbor Rd., Spur Rd. and US RTE 4 intersection as part of the Newington-Dover Bridge Project

Keith Cota, PE, Chief Project Manager for NH DOT, provided an overview for a roundabout alternative in the location specified in application. They are looking for city input for an alternative change, and improvements on the Spaulding Turnpike. They are focusing on Boston Harbor Road, Spur Road, and Route 4 just off of the Scammel Bridge, to change intersection access. This project will start at Exit 1 on Gosling Road, and continue North past Exit 6. The purpose will be reducing safety issues, and to improve transportation efficiency. K.Cota discussed the traffic volume for the area, and the importance of this being a critical point for travel between the North and South. Currently there are a high number of interchanges, no room to changes lanes, geometric deficiencies, and poor local and system connectivity. He noted there is no connectivity between the two bridges, and accident data shows long delays. This project will make an overall improvement, and help the magnitude of the problems. He discussed the reconstruction that will need to take place on Exits 1 thru 6, and the interchanges. There will be little rehab work done to Little Bay Bridge, and General Sullivan Bridge, they will be improving the bus system, and will be constructing Park and Ride facilities. All projects will be broken up into multiple contracts, and construction will start in September on the southbound side of Little Bay Bridge. The roundabout project is listed as the “Q” contract, which will start in the summer of 2013 and go to summer 2016. They are investing in a series of funding, and most of the funding comes from the Turnpike Department of NH DOT. K.Cota discussed the parcels of land they will preserve for mitigation. He discussed the Impetus study, an engineering assessment that reviews the whole project, noting how they will reduce impacts and the added benefits of project. K.Cota noted before they make the change they looked at the environmental impact of the area, and feels this project meets the environmental and community needs.

Rob Faulkner, of CHP, working with NHDOT, noted his company is responsible for the Dover design of this project. He described the design plan, and noted this roundabout increases capacity in this section and eliminates left hand turns. The roundabout alternative is a 2 lane hybrid, single lane for Boston Harbor Road and Spur Rd. The roundabout will be 160 feet in diameter, which is smaller than the one in Portsmouth. This allows full access at the intersection, and eliminates the Spur Rd connector and eliminates the Underpass under Rt.4. With the elimination of the Rt. 4 connector, and the Underpass, the slope access will be significantly lower. R.Faulkner discussed the components, and directional uses for the roundabouts, and how roundabouts are utilized in other cities throughout NH. He noted that roundabouts have to be operated at slower speeds. This roundabout will operate as a yield condition, and will have less conflict points at most intersections between pedestrians and vehicles. The benefits for the roundabout are improved capacity, signalization, less pollution, and allows for U turns. He described the layout that will be used for this intersection, including the shoulder height.

Nick Sanders, Traffic Engineer with VHB, presented three simulations for signalizations. He conducted the report with traffic counts figured for the year 2025 volumes, with 3 different peak



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hour timeframes. He noted the increased volume of commuters, and feels with the roundabout there will be ample space to exit and merge.

K.Cota noted that this roundabout is similar to the Keene roundabout, and will operate the same way. He discussed an alternative comparison that they worked on with FEIS, and they addressed the wetland impact area. He noted the difference of the connecting areas and the inconvenience of the underpass, and he feels the roundabout will fix that in regards to traffic and pedestrians. K.Cota noted they have a larger closed drainage system planned (as a result from the FEIS), and the right of way impacts have increased land impact. Maintenance for the connector roads to the bridge will be increased and will need to be maintained more often, NH DOT is looking to City of Dover to maintain those roads. K.Cota briefly discussed total cost of project. Also noted they are looking to build a sound wall going south bound, to offer noise reduction to the neighbors on Boston Harbor Rd. He noted the roundabout meets objectives of the project, there are no changes to public hearing layout, and environmental impacts have been reduced. They are here to gain acceptance from the community and city.

C.Parker confirmed with K.Cota the options, for this application, are to create the Spur Road Underpass in the additional traffic movements, or to create the roundabout. K.Cota confirmed that is what is on the Board for a decision.

Chair noted that this is a public information session from the NHDOT for the Planning Board and the Public. He noted we are here to address the two alternatives that were brought forth from the NH DOT. All comments will be taking under conversation with the Planning Board, and advisement of NH DOT.

Public Hearing Opened

Karen Weston, 42 French Cross Rd, here as a representative of Transportation Advisory Committee. She feels that the presentation did not address the impact of traffic the 3 proposed lights will have on Dover Pt. Rd. into the queue of the roundabout. Also noted her concern with snow removal for the roundabout, and would like to know how this will be addressed

Ray Bardwell, 199 Spur Rd, feels the roundabout is better than a tunnel. He is concerned about the crosswalk, and feels the refuse island is small. The amount of traffic at site and speed of vehicles is a concern for the safety of citizens, including cyclists, utilizing this area. He suggested installing pedestals for pedestrians at this site, and noted he has some reservations with this project.

Kristen Frederick Frost, 7 Boston Harbor Rd, feels that safety was not addressed in concern for cyclists. She is concerned that the mergers will not look behind them, and will not be looking for people that are crossing the crosswalk. The cyclists have a great connectivity with the General Sullivan, and they need to be taking that into consideration. Most accidents seem to come from distracted drivers, and she doesn't see how this roundabout will alleviate this problem. The first alternative seems a little safer considering that people are looking around. She feels there is conflicts in the presentation that showed 2 traffic lanes when this project is designed for 4 lanes.



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Gordon Smith, Boston Harbor Road, noted he will be living in a construction zone and wishes the NHDOT would just buy his house. He noted there have been few accidents in the current signalized intersection and points of conflict, which were pointed out from NHDOT. G.Smith feels they work fine. The current intersection is easier for plowing, and feels there will be problems with drainage. He offered a suggestion for better traffic flow, and feels roundabout will not get people to the bridge faster, and feels that they won't look into putting in the sound barrier.

Hugh "Buddy" Vaughan, 11 Boston Harbor Rd, thanked the engineers for all their hard work for alternative solutions. He feels there is more traffic and congestion right now. The problem area will be trucks that come from the Scammel Bridge. The truckers will be using their jake brakes to slow down for the roundabout, and the motorcycles will be louder. He suggested moving the traffic circle behind the houses and not by the neighborhood. There have been many changes in past years, and would like to get rid of congestion. In favor of the roundabout, but would like it further away from residential and closer to the state highway.

Betsy Leavitt, 11 Boston Harbor Rd, asked for consideration on human behavior in regards to changing traffic patterns. She feels the corridor is traveled by people that are unfamiliar with navigation of roundabouts, or not familiar with NH State laws. Also noted there is some risk for people trying to get on Spur RD or Boston Harbor RD., the right hand turns will be difficult to turn into. Also noted the plowing may be an issue on this surface, as it will not be as easy to plow.

Alexis Frederick Frost, 7 Boston Harbor RD, noted he is concerned of the conflict points when coming into the lanes of traffic towards Boston Harbor Rd. He understands the entrance lanes, but hybrid roundabouts may be difficult to merge into steady traffic. There is a significant amount of cyclists and this may be dangerous, and would like to something made to help cyclists be seen.

Public Hearing Closed

C.Parker suggested that public comments should be submitted, in writing, to the Planning Department. He will put together this feedback, and will present this to the Board. He encourages more feedback, and will work to get a PDF version put on the website.

D.Trefethen noted that he is a City Councilor and on the City Planning Board, and uses this site daily. D.Trefethen commented on the Meredith and Sanford roundabouts, noting the 4 roadways going into these roundabouts are in equal flow. He feels that traffic flow is not equal here, nor the behavior of traffic is evaluated properly. D.Trefethen suggested NHDOT to consider a pedestrian bridge and not a crosswalk. This is going to be a viable part of this project considering the safety of the pedestrians. Jake Brake signage needs to be considered for this area as well, and noted that other places have these "no brake signs". The traffic is bad and will get worse, and feels that emissions will not be reduced if the signalization will be increased in this area. He discussed the amount of traffic that comes from the different access points from Dover Point and Scammel Bridge, and feels this project has to serve a purpose for the other two intersections.



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L.Merullo noted her concern for pedestrians, and suggested an overhead pedestrian bridge, or some kind of raised bridge. She feels this looks like a rotary, and given her experience with rotaries she knows if they get bad signalization has to be installed. If approved something needs to be done for pedestrians.

Chair noted that he agrees with L.Merullo with safety concerns, as he uses this intersection personally, and cringes over the thought of people crossing the roundabout.

M.Gasses is optimistic of this being a good choice. She has some reservations, in concern with pedestrians. With traffic moving along at 45 mph, if a pedestrian has to cross, and a car has to stop she is concerned that a chain effect may incur with vehicles behind the stopped vehicle. She is in agreement that pedestrian safety has to be addressed. Also noted it would be helpful if traffic could flow freely there; poor signalization will incur traffic backup.

D.Andolina feels people approaching roundabout who are not familiar with this are going to be confused. Most people exceed speed limit, and feels it may be unrealistic that vehicles will go through at 35 mph. To keep area moving properly they will need solid traffic control, and feels there was no discussion on traffic control or traffic speed. He noted his concern with the Portsmouth traffic circle, and would like to know what is planned for traffic control.

L.Skinner noted his concern with pedestrian safety, considering the amount of cars coming through this area. He feels the pictures submitted by applicant show existing roundabouts in downtown locations, and not in a location like the straight shot coming from Durham. He feels the cars will drive by significantly faster than a downtown roundabout, and would like some reassurance that this downtown roundabout will work for this area.

C.Parker asked K.Cota if the miles per hour would change on the connecting road to the Scammel Bridge, considering the existing alternative which is making Route 4 another entrance way to the Spaulding. K.Cota does not feel they will increase the speed limit. Speed limit will be the same as the transition area; just will be taking out the obstacle.

5. Staff Comments

C.Parker noted that in April he had mentioned Planning received an award from the New Hampshire Planners Association for the Form Based Code Project. He got confirmation that this has been forwarded to the regional American Planners Association and submitted to the Northern New England Planning Awards. He is waiting to hear back on this by the end of August, early September. C.Parker has been selected because of City of Dover's requirements for Open Space Subdivisions, to be a model for other communities. He will be going to the State Planning Office to do a voiceover for City of Dover's Zoning Ordinance. Noted there has been a change to the staff memo for P10-37, to include more background and information on this project.

M.Gasses welcomed T.Clark to the Board. She noted her concern when T.Clark stepped down earlier. She noted what constitutes a Board member to recues himself from the Board, and looks forward to his expertise that he brings to the Board



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The Chair welcomed Jake Forget and Thomas Clark to the Board.

6. Committee Reports

L.Merullo noted the Pervious Subcommittee, and C.Parker, met yesterday. There are a few regulations to be added, but will bring a report to the Board in September. They are looking for approval from Board to start pervious surfacing.

D.Trefethen noted he received a copy of the Bi-Laws today, and the Bi-Laws committee will be meeting soon.

7. Adjournment:

Motion: F.Torr made the motion to adjourn meeting at 8:49 pm. D.Trefethen seconded. Vote: Unanimous