



Meeting Notes

Place: Jaffrey Fire Department
138 Turnpike Road

Date: February 15, 2022

Notes Taken by: M. Kennedy

Project #: 52792.00

Re: Jaffrey US 202 Improvements
#16307
Public Informational Meeting #1

The meeting began at approximately 7:00 pm with Jaffrey Town Manager Jon Frederick welcoming everyone (in-person and via Zoom) to the meeting. He also welcomed and thanked Executive Councilor Wheeler for taking the time to attend the meeting and for his support of the project. Mr. Fredrick then proceeding to introduce Tobey Reynolds, NHDOT Project Manager, who then began the presentation.

Mr. Reynolds provided a brief overview of the current status of the project noting that the plan is to advertise the project for construction in June 2023. He reminded the audience of the project purpose and described the plan that was approved through the October 2019 Public Hearing. Mr. Reynolds then introduced Marty Kennedy with VHB to discuss the community outreach effort.

Mr. Kennedy noted that similar to what was done during the planning phase of the project, our objective is to 1) keep the community informed and 2) provide the community a voice. Mr. Kennedy discussed the various public outreach elements including the project website, the email stakeholder list, project newsletters, public meetings, Select Board briefings, property owner meetings, and Main Street walkarounds. He explained that the purpose of the Main Street walkarounds is keep downtown business owners, who might not be able to attend public meetings, informed and provide them opportunities to ask questions one-on-one. We will announce specific days when we'll be in the downtown. Business owners will have an opportunity to schedule a time for us to come by the business to talk.

Bob Landry with VHB (formally with NHDOT) proceeded to discuss the design project schedule and provided an update on some current activities such as trying to enhance access to a building on Blake Street and responding to property acquisition requests by residential property owners located at the River Street roundabout. Mr. Landry proceeded to show and describe a plan view and an elevation view of the planned bridge. Additionally, Mr. Landry noted that we intend to prepare a visualization showing a view of the bridge looking at it from Main Street as was requested at a recent Select Board briefing. We expect to show the visualization at the next public meeting.

Next, Mr. Reynolds proceeded to review a preliminary version of the anticipated construction schedule noting that the duration of the construction would likely extend 2 ½ seasons. He noted that vehicular and pedestrian access to downtown businesses and the multi-use trail will be maintained. Additionally, due to the proximity of residential homes no night work is anticipated. Mr. Reynolds proceeded to show and describe a preliminary 7-phase traffic control plan on how traffic flow will likely be maintained during various phases of construction.

At this point the meeting was opened to the public for questions. Questions raised by individuals attending the meeting in-person as well as individuals on Zoom where as follows:

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How will pedestrians be accommodated during construction, particularly with the students from the nearby schools?

Answer - It's too early yet, but we will be preparing a plan to accommodate pedestrian access and mobility during construction.

What is the current rating of the Main Street bridge? Will the project bring it up the highest rating?

Answer - The existing bridges are in satisfactory to good condition. The NHDOT intends to combine a bridge preservation effort for both Main Street bridges. The sidewalks will also be upgraded as part of the US 202 project.

What are the plans for mitigating or relocating Alderman Park?

Answer - The NHDOT is working with the Town on how and where it will be relocated in the downtown.

How will you be able to accommodate truck and school bus traffic through the construction area?

Answer - For the most part trucks and buses will travel through the downtown much like they do today or onto the newly constructed roadway. There will be some stages of the construction that will have trucks, buses, as well as all vehicles slightly rerouted as different sections of roadways get upgraded or constructed.

How much traffic will be diverted away from Main Street to the new US Route 202 connector bridge?

Answer - Currently, Main Street between River Street and Peterborough Street carries approximately 1,200 vehicles per hour (vph) (total of both directions) during the weekday evening peak hour. That volume will drop by approximately 58% to 500 vph once the project is completed. Similarly, the volume of traffic on River Street, just south of Main Street, is expected to drop by approximately 75% from 830 vph to 210 vph. This shift of US 202 traffic to the new bridge and roadway will contribute to a much more pedestrian friendly environment along Main Street and River Street north of the proposed three leg roundabout.

Will there be detours during construction?

Answer - There will be no signs directing traffic to a designated detour route outside the immediate construction zone. Locals may know and use other routes to avoid the construction zone, but the NHDOT will not be directing motorists to detour away from the construction area.

What will the improvements to Turnpike Road (NH 124) be?

Answer - Within the project limits, sidewalks will be provided on both sides. The roadway work will include paving, striping, formalizing the shoulders and tying into the existing driveways.

How will crossing of snowmobiles be accommodated at the roundabout?

Answer - The NHDOT has met with the NH Bureau of Trails in the field, and we are being told that as long as snowmobilers can cross in a relatively straight line, they will be fine. The design accommodates the snowmobilers with sloped curb and a textured pavement section between Stratton Road and Turnpike Road that will allow them to cross in a straight line similar to what they do today.

How will access to businesses, such as the pizza shop on Blake Street, be accommodated during construct?

Answer - There's no question that maintaining good access to all business during construction will be challenging, but we will be developing plans for each phase of construction to, as best possible, maintain access to all businesses.

Will there be additional property acquisitions beyond those presented at the Public Hearing?

Answer - Two property owners located near the River Street roundabout asked that their properties be considered for acquisition. That process and associated negotiations are on-going.

Is there consideration of additional property acquisitions along Blake Street?

Answer - No.

Has the project budget increased and if so, is there still sufficient funding or could the Town be on the hook to cover additional costs?

Answer - As the project advances, we continue to update our budget. The anticipated project cost has increased, but the project is still fully funded under the Federal Aid program and there is no need to transfer any costs to the Town. There might be additional amenities that the Town would like, and that would involve discussion with the Town on some possible cost sharing, but the project as currently proposed is fully funded. Select Board member Frank Sterling noted that the Town has been setting aside funds to cover the costs of additional "wish-list" type amenities that the Town may want added to the project.

Any update with discussions on the War Memorial Park? Rick Lambert of the War Memorial Committee noted his concerns with the impact on the park during and after construction.

Answer - The current plan is to have discussions with the War Memorial Committee in the spring once details of that area are a little further along.

Are there any flood storage capacities issues due to the impact on the riverbank by the construction of the bridge?

Answer - There are no flood storage capacity impacts. We'll be submitting a wetlands plan this summer.

If the additional residential acquisitions at the River Street happen, when would they be moving out of their homes?

Answer - It would be best for the individual of the specific property to contact Tobey Reynolds directly and he will provide them the information on the status of the acquisition.

Will people use North Street as short-cut around the construction?

Answer - The project would not include any detour signs that either direct motorists to use North Street or prohibit them from using North Street.

What's the status on coordinating underground utilities?

Answer - The NHDOT coordination with the Town on their water lines is on-going.

Where will the contractor store equipment when they are not working?

Answer - It is the contractors responsibility to find and area to store their equipment, which could be away from the immediate construction area. On this project because of the bridge, there will likely be a need to store materials such as bridge forms, rebar, etc., close to the bridge construction. This could be on Blake Street in the area where the current or proposed parking lot is located.

Will the project include placing overhead utility lines underground?

Answer - It's too early to know for sure, but we're not anticipating the need to place utilities underground.

When will plans be submitted to Contoocook & North Branch Rivers Local Advisory Committee?

Answer - The wetland application would likely be submitted in the summer.

Is there a date for the next public meeting?

Answer - We'll hold the next meeting when we have something to present, which will likely be the preliminary bridge plans and rendering of the bridge. That should be later in the spring. We'll get a meeting notice out well in advance of the meeting.

The meeting ended at approximately 8:05 pm.