

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF HIGHWAY DESIGN**

CONFERENCE REPORT

PROJECT: LYME
X-A000(887)
15695
NH 10 / East Thetford Road Safety Improvements Study

DATE OF CONFERENCE: April 21, 2010

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: Lyme Town Office

ATTENDED BY:	<u>NHDOT</u>	<u>Others</u>
	C. Green	N. Miller - UVLSRPC
	M. Dugas	10 residents and officials (list attached)
	A. Hanscom	

SUBJECT: Local Advisory Task Force Meeting

NOTES ON CONFERENCE:

Following introductions, C. Green provided an overview of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). The purpose of HSIP is to reduce the number of fatal or serious injury crashes on New Hampshire roadways. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation receives approximately \$5.5 million per year to implement safety improvements in locations where accident data indicates safety deficiencies. The selection of HSIP candidate projects is largely data-driven and the funds must be used in locations that have a demonstrated safety need. N. Miller noted that the Town has supplied local crash records to supplement NHDOT's accident data.

M. Dugas and C. Green provided an overview of the Route 10/East Thetford Road intersection and recapped the problems identified at the Working Group's first meeting in February. The problems at the intersection include:

- Expansive pavement with poor definition/traffic markings
- Geometry that facilitates speeding and unsafe turning movements from NH Route 10 Southbound onto East Thetford Road
- Lack of bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Driveways at the intersection that create additional traffic conflict points
- Inadequate sight distances for vehicles turning from East Thetford Road and On the Common onto NH Route 10

M. Dugas reported that, following the Working Group's February meeting, NHDOT staff developed three design alternatives for consideration. N. Miller advised that the Working Group's goal is to evaluate the alternatives and select a preferred alternative that can be presented to the general public later in the spring.

M. Dugas provided an overview of “Alternative #1,” noting that the alternative was based on a sketch provided by a local architect at the first Working Group meeting. This alternative shows a combination of triangular median islands that would channelize the traffic turning onto and from East Thetford Road. M. Dugas discussed the pros and cons of Alternative #1:

Pros of Alternative #1	Cons of Alternative #1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces the expansive pavement at the intersection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not provide adequate turning radius for trucks turning onto East Thetford Road from NH Route 10 Northbound
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channelizes traffic turning onto and from East Thetford Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates additional traffic conflict points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual medians help to prevent traffic traveling southbound on NH Route 10 from speeding onto East Thetford Road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly impacts the “Little Common” area of the village, which is on the National Register of Historic Places
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates difficulties exiting the park-and-ride and bank driveways to NH Route 10

M. Dugas continued, providing an overview of “Alternative #2.” This alternative would shift East Thetford Road significantly to the southwest. Much of the pavement in front of the park-and-ride facility and bank building would be removed and replaced with a curbed, planted “bump out.” As a result, the geometry becomes more like that of a traditional four-way intersection. The driveway to the Mascoma Bank Building would be connected to the park-and-ride facility driveway. Thus, the building would no longer have direct access to East Thetford Road. M. Dugas discussed the pros and cons of Alternative #2:

Pros of Alternative #2	Cons of Alternative #2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces the expansive pavement at the intersection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly impacts the “Little Common” area of the village, which is on the National Register of Historic Places
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves sight distances for drivers turning onto and from East Thetford Road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces access to the Mascoma Bank building and results in a problematic driveway configuration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slows traffic turning from NH Route 10 Southbound onto East Thetford Road 	

M. Dugas noted that Alternative #2 has very significant impacts on the “Little Common” area of Lyme’s village. The NHDOT Bureau of Environment has researched the Little Common and found that it is part of the National Register of Historic Places. As a result, it is considered a “Section 4(f)” property by the federal government. Regulatory agencies will not allow impacts to the Little Common unless NHDOT demonstrates that there is no feasible alternative that would avoid impacts to the property.

M. Dugas then presented “Alternative #3,” which accomplishes many of the same goals as Alternative #2 with minimal impacts to the Little Common. Pavement in front of the park-and-ride facility and bank building would be removed and replaced with a planted “bump out.” On the common would be shifted slightly to the northeast to align with East Thetford Road, and the existing On the Common median would be removed. The pavement removal results in the formalization of a more traditional 4-way intersection. Drivers would be forced to slow down to take a right from NH

Route 10 Southbound onto East Thetford Road. A small median on East Thetford further calms traffic and provides a refuge for pedestrians crossing East Thetford Road. M. Dugas discussed the pros and cons of Alternative #3:

Pros of Alternative #3	Cons of Alternative #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids significant impacts to the “Little Common” area of Lyme Village, which is on the National Register of Historic Places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank driveway may need to be slightly shifted to the west to allow for vehicles to exit to NH Route 10 southbound via East Thetford Road
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces the expansive pavement at the intersection 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calms traffic turning from NH Route 10 Southbound onto East Thetford Road 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains direct access for park-and-ride and bank building 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Median provides a refuge for pedestrians crossing East Thetford Road 	

N. Miller asked for members of the Working Group to comment on the alternatives.

- R. Jones (Selectman) expressed support for Alternative #3, noting that the Lyme Selectmen have reviewed and endorsed the concept. R. Jones noted that the Selectmen will need to discuss the town’s ability to maintain a sidewalk, if incorporated in the design, advising that the median on East Thetford Road can act as a pedestrian refuge.
- M. Dugas advised that the design for Alternative #3 does not preclude the installation of sidewalks. However, it would be the town’s responsibility to maintain the sidewalks.
- P. Field (Police Chief) expressed support for Alternative #3, noting that the Lyme Highway Safety Committee has reviewed and endorsed the concept.
- S. O’Keefe (Lyme Police) expressed support for Alternative #3, noting that the design would significantly calm traffic turning onto East Thetford Road.
- D. Brand (Resident) expressed support for Alternative #3, noting that as the design is refined, the Mascoma Bank driveway should be aligned to allow vehicles to exit to Route 10 Southbound via East Thetford Road without conflicting with the median.
- A. Hanscom (NHDOT District II) advised that slope curbing should be included at the edge of pavement.
- M. Smith (Resident) expressed support for Alternative #3, and advised that advanced warning signage be installed on East Thetford Road to warn drivers approaching the intersection.
- D. O’Hara (Resident) expressed support for Alternative #3, and advised that signage be installed directing drivers as to the proper turning movements for NH Route 10 northbound and southbound. A. Hanscom advised that such signage could be installed on the reclaimed grass strip adjacent to On the Common.

N. Miller called for consensus that Alternative #3, amended as discussed, be formally recommended to NHDOT and presented at a Public Informational Meeting in June. The Working Group concurred and reached consensus on Alternative #3 as the preferred alternative for the project.

R. Jones advised that the Public Informational Meeting should be held on a Wednesday evening in June to avoid conflicts with other standing town committee meetings. N. Miller advised that he would work with NHDOT to schedule the Public Informational Meeting for a Wednesday evening in June.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM. *[Following the meeting, the public informational meeting was scheduled for June 16, 2010 at 7:00 PM at the Lyme Town Office.]*

Submitted by:

Nathan Miller, AICP
UVLSRPC

cc: W. Cass, C. Green, W. Lambert