

Maine DOT – Bar Harbor Route 3 Gateway Project
Advisory Committee meeting
January 18, 9:30-11:30 AM
Church of Our Father, Hulls Cove

Attending: Fred Michaud, Ron Beard, James Blanchard, Edith Milbury, Lewis Gerrish, Paul MacQuinn, Dean Read, Jim Fisher, Tom Crikelair, Sharon Tate, Bonnie Lyons, Kyle Johnson, John Kelly, Anne Krieg, Kim Harty, Dick Cough, others?

Agenda

Introductions and Reflections since our last meeting

- James Blanchard – interested in the balance of costs between MaineDOT and Bar Harbor
- Edith Milbury – missed some of the discussion at the last meeting. Still not comfortable with the concept. This plan appears to be focused on bicycles. We have a road that is crumbling, ice, potholes. Don't see this solution calming traffic. Do we need this to be as wide as projected? Would shoulders be safe for bicycles? Cost is a problem. Rather fix the road now.
- John Kelly – pass
- Bonnie Lyons – pass
- Sharon Tate – still concerned about the bluffs
- Millard – walked the route this morning. Very beautiful.
- Kyle – wait
- Paul – later
- Dean – want to open this corridor for all users

Review and adjust agenda – Ron Beard

- Timeline: One more committee meeting before the public meeting

Updates - Fred Michaud

Met with Deputy Director and staffers for FHWA to talk about phasing this project.

- Engineering for the entire corridor can be done all at once.
- Want the project to be ready to go.
- The project can be broken into four sections, but the termini must be logical.

Met with MaineDOT and Office of Historic Preservation

- Consultants have done an incredible job
- Some of the findings suggest national merit
- Will continue dialogue about preservation

Environmental analysis / checklist required

- Historic, environmental, social impacts

- This committee might consider being part of the public involvement during the assessment, engineering and construction phases.

Question

- Report on NPR about transportation spending – are changes underway?
 - Fred: Bangor Daily had an article about redirecting funding from enhancements and redirection of funds. It is unlikely that funds will be moved from enhancements, like sidewalks, to basic road maintenance.
- What is the local share for this project likely to be?
 - Fred: Local share from this project may be little or none, depending on location of enhancements. Arterial road improvements are generally a mix of federal and state funds. Replacement of sidewalks is also generally federal and state. New sidewalks and amenities may require some local funding.

Considerations for Island Explorer— Tom Crikelair

Identified locations along Island Explorer Routes where there are concerns about safety or customer convenience during a recent planning process.

- Created a list of important locations and a 15 year capital improvement plan
- First phase – 8 bus stops - \$240,000
- Second phase – 7 bus stops - \$210,000
- These are not funded yet, but they are included in the Transportation Improvement Plan, but funding has yet to be secured.
- Example of a model bus stop – in Front of Bar Harbor Motel
 - Designed by Sam Copelan, paid for by Dick Collier (private funding)
 - Works very well
 - Turnout with sidewalk, bench and bus stop sign
- Currently a number of the bus stops take the bus off of Route 3 – this is slower and can be difficult when buses are caught behind other traffic.

Eden Street Bus

- On the short list are three location in this CSS Corridor (Eden Street bus moves a lot of people)
 - College of the Atlantic
 - Atlantic Oceanside
 - *[Regency/Ferry Terminal – assuming that ferry service will be resumed – need some safe means for buses to pull off for this and the Regency Hotel]*
 - Acadia Inn – bus cannot fit under the awning when there are motorcoaches at the Inn
 - *[Intersection of Cottage and Eden Streets]*
 - *[Safe Routes to Schools Grant may help provide space for bus to pull off near to Emerson]*
 - *Eden Brook Run – alternative place for people from COA*

- Riders will walk across the street to catch buses going the direction that they want to go. Need to recognize pedestrian traffic in these locations.
 - Precise location of the stops can be adjusted for safety.

Campground Bus

- Major stops are Hulls Cove Visitor Center and ...
- Need designated stops on both sides of Route 3
 - Ideally one of each, but design may produce more than one
- School House – does not need a stop on the Hill
 - The stop at Barton’s Motel will serve these provided there is a pedestrian walkway
 - Improvements at this site may be merited – be sure that redesign does not compromise what is there
- One safe location to serve the neighborhoods between Barton’s and Sand Point Road might be merited
- Sea Breeze Motel – might be considered, particularly if the Sea Breeze advocates this.
- Bar Harbor Campground is a major stop – it is very safe
 - Encourage safe walkways for people to get to this stop
- There are no good, safe places to stop the bus until you get to sand point road.
- Best Western wants a stop, but currently it is not safe
 - Buses cannot cross the lanes of traffic safely

Intersections

- Exiting the Regency – left hand turn
- Bar Harbor Campground – left hand turn
- Exiting the Hulls Cove Visitor Center – left hand turn
 - This is also very difficult for cyclists
- Would like to have the buses on the old Bar Harbor Road, but would need a better connector to Route 3. MDI Bio staff sometimes use Old Norway Drive, but this is not a very good place to wait for a bus.
- Important point is to use pedestrian ways to safe bus stops.

Questions:

- Would you want stops on both sides if people could walk across the road safely?
 - Yes – this stop is also very good for promoting the museum at COA

Wrap up: The bus projects will enhance this project and may attract additional funding. This is not competing with funding for highway dollars.

Review of Consensus Guidelines (see reverse side)

Levels of Consensus (from Shuman)

http://www.csus.edu/ccp/collaborative/ccp_reaching_consensus_on_consensus.pdf

1. I can say an unqualified "yes" to the decision. I am satisfied that the decision is an expression of the wisdom of the group.
2. I find the decision perfectly acceptable.
3. I can live with the decision; I'm not especially enthusiastic about it.
4. I do not fully agree with the decision and need to register my view about it. However, I do not choose to block the decision. I am willing to support the decision because I trust the wisdom of the group.
5. I do not agree with the decision and feel the need to stand in the way of this decision being accepted.
6. I feel that we have no clear sense of unity in the group. We need to do more work before consensus can be reached. (Kelsey 1991).

Ideally we would have drawings that illustrate all of the points, but funding for these comes at a later phase.

1. Ireson Hill (Pirates Cove to Barton's Motel)

There seems to be a consensus that we should design this section of the corridor to have two 11 foot travel ways, with 5 foot paved shoulders on both sides of the road. Throughout the corridor, paved shoulders would serve bicycle use and any other normal shoulder us, such as delivery trucks, breakdowns, etc. Some suggested that visitors and residents would like to walk to the restaurants and store and to Pirates Cove, at the top of Ireson Hill.

Comments and Questions

Paul Macquin – would like to see some sections where shoulders are not needed

- Decreasing shoulders from 5' to 2' or none
- Use existing paving at the parking lots and intersections
- Need to figure out when a change will be too expensive

Lewis Gerrish - Where intersections are not 90 degrees, there are some dangerous movements

- Need to improve separation between the parking and the road
- People are cutting the edge of the parking lot to make the turn
- People don't want to slow down for the turn – fear of read ending

Owner - Concerned about moving the utilities back to accommodate shoulders

- Cannot move any of the buildings back
- Concerned about losing viability of business
- Are 4' shoulders possible? (Fred: needs to go through the design review process)
- Perhaps there should be a crosswalk
- Bus stop warning sign

Edith – widening the road will cut into the roots of the trees

- To protect the residential areas and trees – prefer not to have the shoulders

- People go too fast now – widening the road may cause people to speed
- Fred – there will be arborists involved in the design process

Dean – we cannot answer all of these questions now. We will need to see some of the engineering studies.

Bonnie Lyons – perhaps we need to set a minimum shoulder width – 3'? then push for 5' where possible.

2. Barton's Motel into Hulls Cove

There seems to be a consensus for two 11 foot travel ways with 5 foot paved shoulders and a pedestrian sidewalk on the right side as you head to Hulls Cove, using a small esplanade where conditions allow. In the section by the Church of Our Father and the Hulls Cove School House, this may require purchase of easements for utilities and drainage. (Sample comments below)

Fred Michaud - New information about the concrete walls

- Question is whether the walls should be removed – the reduce site distance and the sound reverberates between them
- Walls were added in the 1930's as a cut to reduce the hump in the road
- There are 49.5' of right of way

Dick Cough

- Need to work out a better system for drainage through this section
- Kyle Johnson
 - o In front of the hotel – the 11+5 design would require moving the sign, rose garden, poles and utilities
 - o Want more flexibility
 - Combine bike path, esplanade and sidewalk to reduce overall width
 - o Had benches across the street, but they were only there a few weeks
 - Garbage collected
 - Benches were stolen
- Fred
 - o Road and shoulders are buildable as is
 - o Question is whether a sidewalk is desired here
 - o Ron – asking Kyle to sketch a plan for how a sidewalk would fit in this segment
 - o Could have the sidewalk go around the other side of the rose garden
- Lewis
 - o Shoulder would provide some place for people to walk
 - o Would like to have consistency through the entire corridor
 - o Sidewalk from Colony to Hulls Cove Store might use a sidewalk.
 - o Sidewalk up to the Old School and Church might be a waste of funds
- Church
 - o Had 26 rentals at the School House last year – really need a cross walk for people that are using these two facilities

- MaineDOT would need to look at safety of a crosswalk.
- Millard Dority
 - Crosswalks need to have safe landings
- Drop the idea of speed tables – might be able to have enhancements for crosswalks
- Add bus stops as recommended by Tom Crikelair

3. Hulls Cove Village

There seems to be consensus for two 11 foot travel ways with 5 foot paved shoulders, and that we provide a pedestrian walk way continuing from Ireson Hill to the Hulls Cove General Store, with appropriate crosswalks (perhaps slightly raised “speed tables” to provide further traffic calming) across the Crooked Road and Route 3. Some folks have thought of exploring a recreational bikeway that connects the village to Breakneck Road and access to Acadia. Some folks also feel it would be good to provide appropriate pedestrian access to the gravel shore of Hulls Cove, with benches above the shore.

More detailed discussion to reach consensus statement around Bluffs

Draft Alternative Consensus Statements for Bluffs

1. Optimum redesign: There seems to be strong consensus that the *optimum redesign* of Route 3 at the Bluffs should allow for two 11 foot travel ways, with paved shoulders of five feet, adequate room on the ocean side for a safe scenic turn out, and adequate room on the landward side to allow for drainage and to reduce likelihood of danger from falling stone and ice. The *optimum redesign* will require significant removal of ledge from the landward side of the road.

2. Improve what exists now: If for whatever reasons, significant removal of ledge is not possible, then there is consensus to stabilize existing ledge to prevent rock and ice fall onto roadway, to improve paved shoulders for bike use and to improve safety for existing turnout.

More detailed discussion regarding bike-pedestrian access from Hulls Cove to Acadia through existing service road

Is there consensus for abandoning first section of right turn lane and replacing with new bike-pedestrian path, separated from travel way by esplanade, with the right turn lane for current entrance to Acadia starting beyond service road.

Questions and Comments

Ron – we should put forward our ideal and then consider alternatives

Dean – there are not five foot paved shoulders now

- Nobody likes option 2 – losing the wide shoulder on the ocean-side.

James Blanchard

- don’t want a scenic turnout that might fill with tour buses

Paul – what is the width now? Would it permit shoulders and a pull out?

- Pulling some of the ledge off would produce enough fill for fill on the other side
- A turnout would be a significant enhancement to the corridor
-

Lewis – what is the distance between the white line and the wall?

- There might be enough space, but rock and ice falls make the wall-side

Edith – concerned about impacts on people that live near to the bluffs

- Houses and the yacht club are not immediately below this section

Anne Krieg

- This is going to be a place people stop, safe or not
- This is an opportunity for improving a visitor site

John Kelly – need some information to take back to the park

- The park will not have problem with improving what is there
- There would be some concerns about ledge removal –
- This should be a formal scenic turnout or no turnout at all
- The scenic overlook does not need to be at the pinnacle of the curve, with a little tree trimming, there might be another spot

Eden Street to Village Section

- Time ran out at this point and discussion was tabled until the next meeting

NEXT MEETING - February 8 (snow day February 9) 9:30 AM Church of Our Father

Homework and agendas for February 8 Project Advisory Committee meeting and February 28

Public Meeting to share preliminary recommendations

- Concept plans/section sketches for Bluffs
- Concept plans/section sketches for COA corridor to West Street
- Concept plans/section sketches for Hulls Cove Village
- Concept plans/section sketches for Hulls Cove School House area
- Other material for review on February 8??