

## ***Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway)***

### **I-95 Canton Interchange Task Force Meeting**

#### **Meeting Notes**

**November 13, 2008**

**Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce**

**Attendees:** See Appendix A.

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Ed Hollingshead of Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST) welcomed the group of attendees and explained that the purpose of the meeting would be to address current and potential future conditions on Routes I-95 and I-93 and in the communities surrounding the proposed interchange. Mike Furlong of Mass Highway noted that the process remains on schedule and that its next major milestone will be the Environmental Assessment/Draft Environment Impact Report in the spring of 2009.

#### **Overview of the FST Presentation**

Following these opening remarks, FST's Ed Hollingshead presented Task Force members with a "no build" or baseline view of the future that would exist if all current trends and development in the area were to take place without the proposed interchange. No-Build conditions referred to no improvement at the I-95/I-93 interchange. However, it was noted that future year conditions did assume that a northbound off-ramp from I-95 to Dedham Street would be in place. To inform this view, the presentation began with current (2007) or recent a.m. and p.m. peak hour traffic volumes and peak hour traffic operations. The implications of congested entrance and exit points between I-95 and I-93 was noted. Additionally, the likely implications of these congested operations on the choices of some drivers to avoid this interstate congestion and divert to local roads was mentioned. Also, crash locations and crash types for study area segments of I-93 and I-95 their ramp systems, and local streets was illustrated. The likely relationship of rear end crashes and congested operations on the interstate was made. Bill Moore presented examples of locations at ramps that do not conform to current design standards. The overlap of these locations with high crash locations was noted. Next, the process for utilizing a computer model to project future year 2015 and 2026 peak hour traffic volumes was explained by Ed Bromage; following that Ed Hollingshead presented 2015 and 2026 No-Build (but with the Dedham Street exit ramp from I-95 northbound) peak hour traffic volumes and operations.

The overarching theme was that the current I-95/I-93 interchange has a number of problematic design features and is already reaching capacity. At the same time, certain local roadways, (Dedham Street and Cedarcrest Road) are inundated with cut-through

traffic from drivers trying to avoid congestion at the interchange. Although efforts have already been made to curtail cut-through traffic on Cedarcrest Road, traffic volumes obtained through recent counts show that during the a.m. peak hour it is still utilized as a cut through route. Lastly, it is likely that conditions in future years will intensify congested operations.

## Question and Answer Session

Q. Peter Pineo:

Could you provide me with the current and future turning movement volumes for the intersection of Washington Street and Dedham Streets?

A. Ed Hollingshead (EH):

Yes, I can certainly provide you with those.

Q. Bill Gage:

Why did you model the years 2015 and 2026?

A. EH:

With these types of project, you model conditions on opening day; when we did the scope for the project, the agreed opening date was 2015. Additionally, the Federal Highway Administration wants to make sure the project will have a useful life and won't be overwhelmed the day it opens. The useful life generally has at least a 10-year horizon, so that's how we arrived at 2026.

Q. Kevin Harrington:

When you projected \$14.4 million to build the Dedham Street interchange, did that include widening the bridges in there?

A. EH:

No, it doesn't, because at the time we were not aware of the problem with the lane drop, which we only discovered later. I'm happy to discuss that with you further at the next Dedham Street sub group meeting.

Q. Kevin Harrington:

Unless you consider that, none of this will work. I think Dedham and Canton Street is at LOS F because the I-95 southbound on-ramp was originally meant as a mitigation, but it's become a red F because of all the people coming down through Norwood and compounding the intersection's problems. Unless you widen those bridges, it won't work. Do you think the work on the Dedham Street bridges will happen before 2015?

A. EH:

I think that work will likely be needed as part of the larger interchange improvement, however, we are still analyzing this and are not yet ready to reach this final conclusion. .

Q. James Donovan:

Do you think that traffic on Cedarcrest Road and Dedham Street will go down with a new interchange?

A. EH:

Yes, we think so.

Q. James Donovan:

What about traffic from the southbound ramps that makes a U-turn in business parking lots?

A. EH:

When the northbound ramp opens, Dedham Street will be a 5-lane bridge, and the southbound ramp will allow left turns. That will address the U-turns in the businesses there, but alone it won't address people avoiding the I-95/I-93 interchange.

Q. Steve Pearlman:

Are you looking at the \$1 million being spent on traffic calming for Canton Street?

A. Ed Hollingshead:

We're aware of it, though it isn't really reflected in the model at this time.

## Next Steps

The process will have three meetings in January 2009:

- The Northern Stub/Pedestrian and Trail subgroup<sup>1</sup> on January 9, 2009;
- The Dedham Street subgroup on January 22, 2009; and
- The next full meeting of the Task Force on January 29, 2009. At this meeting, FST will present the results of its modeling of future conditions *with* the proposed interchange.

At present, all meetings are scheduled to take place from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. at the Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce. Howard/Stein-Hudson will provide Task Force members with ample forewarning of any changes in schedule or location.

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<sup>1</sup> For an up-to-date listing of subgroup members as of November 17, 2008, please see **Appendix B**.

## Appendix A: Attendees at the 11/13/2008 Meeting

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Stephen Bates	Shields Packaging
Mark Boyle	MBTA
Mike Boynton	Town of Walpole
Ed Bromage	Fay, Spofford, Thorndike
Nate Cabral-Curtis	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Stephen Carroll	NSTAR
Eileen Commene	Dedham-Westwood Water District
Al DeNapoli	Town of Walpole
James Donovan	Town of Canton
John Ferrari	1 Beacon Insurance Company
David Field	Town of Dedham
Mike Furlong	MassHighway
William Gage	MEPA
Brian Haak	DCR
Kevin Harrington	Emerald Holdings, LLC
Jill Hayes	Friends of Little Blue Hill
Patrick Higgins	Town of Walpole
Ed Hollingshead	Fay, Spofford, Thorndike
Jane Howard	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Michael Jaillet	Town of Westwood
Taber Keally	Three Rivers Interlocal Council
Bill Lyons	Traffic Solutions
Bill Moore	Fay, Spofford, Thorndike
Bob MacKenzie	DCR
Chris McKeown	Town of Westwood
Steve Olanoff	Friends of the Blue Hills
Peter Pineo	Citizens for Ponkapoag
Mark Ryan	Town of Norwood

**Appendix B: Members of Subgroups as of 11/17/2008**

<b>Dedham Street</b>	<b>Northern Stub/ Pedestrian and Trail</b>	<b>Both Subgroups</b>
George Bates	Ruth Helfeld	Adam Berger
Stephen Bates	Robert MacKenzie	Eileen Commane
John Carroll	Jennifer Oriola	Taber Keally
James Donovan	Ian Cooke	Sue McQuaid
Bill Friel	Peter Pineo	Steven Olanoff
Kevin Harrington	Norm Smith	
Michael Jaillet	Elizabeth Sorenson	
Peter Nordblom	John D. Viola	
Mark Ryan	Donald Yonika	
Paul Tyrder	John Ferrari	
	Alexandra Echandi	
	Jill Hayes	