

Bar Harbor Route 3 Gateway Project Public Meeting
October 25, 2010 4:30 to 6 PM
Town Hall Auditorium

Welcome and introductions

Overview of session—Ron Beard, University of Maine Cooperative Extension

- Project overview
- Ground Rules
- Project Advisory Committee

Review of Context Sensitive Solutions approach

- Fred Michaud, Maine Department of Transportation

Differences between CSS and standard corridor planning process

- Greater attention to historical and other local assets
- Consideration of ways to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian planning
- Preserving the charm of the corridor while meeting transportation objectives
- Building local consensus and support for solution

Resource: www.contextsensitivesolutions.org

Ron: Why choose this process?

Fred: MaineDOT gets in a lot of trouble with the standard design. We want a project that will be supported locally. Other projects are moving in Carabasset Valley and other communities.

Plan for Route 3

- Still a blank sheet as no decisions or specific proposals have been adopted
- We are meeting with the community to get local ideas for what services are needed and what assets to preserve or enhance.

Timeline – working through priorities. Construction will probably not start until 2014

- November 2: Finalize problem and vision statements and discuss criteria for evaluation of alternative solutions at Church of Our Father in Halls Cove
- November 30: DOT will present preliminary design alternatives to committee
- December 16: Committee refines alternatives
- January: Committee selects preferred alternatives
- Public meeting to present preferred alternatives and seeking input in February
- Committee considers public input and refines recommendations in March
- MDOT and Project Advisory Committee presents final design at public meeting in April

Draft Problem Statement

The Route 3 Corridor is the primary entrance to Bar Harbor, Acadia National Park and to our commercial center, passing through several neighborhoods, the village of Hulls Cove and areas of impressive scenic beauty. This portion of Route 3 is designated as and “All American Road” under the federal Scenic Byway Program. Its condition is rough and deteriorated. There is limited protection for pedestrians and the shoulders are not well suited for bicyclist. This does not present a positive or welcoming experience for the millions annual users of this corridor.

In this process for determining context sensitive solutions, we hope to improve safety and efficiency of travel for all users, while attending to the following in a redesign of the travel corridor:

- Roadway width and design
- Pedestrian ways and bike ways
- Access to local roads, businesses, and residences
- Drainage, lighting and other environmental impacts
- Historic and scenic quality
- Scenic turnouts, way-finding and interpretive signage

Draft Vision Statement

We envision Bar Harbor Route 3, from Ireson Hill to Mount Desert Street, will provide a safe, efficient and aesthetically pleasing transportation corridor that encourages multiple uses and maintains or enhances the historic standards representative of Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park.

Questions and comments:

- 1) Is it a given that this project will use this **footprint**? There is a bottle neck at the end of the corridor. Improvements that do not address the bottleneck may result in a more attractive but still **congested** road. I'm not looking for scenery. I'm looking for a quicker route. We may need to go beyond the standard fix of the road.

Fred: We are working within the corridor to the extent possible. Much of the corridor is a 49.5' right of way. We are looking for safety improvements. This may not meet a thirty year growth horizon.

- 2) Are you going to pull up all the **cement under the road**?

Fred: Yes. This is going to be a major reconstruction. Town needs to coordinate water and sewer lines.

- 3) Hope that there will be space for a **bike path** in this project? I ride now, but Route 3 is unsafe.

Ron: Defer to Dean Read.

Dean: We have talked about on road and off road options. Some sections will be difficult for off road solutions, but we may have some on and some off road sections. Bikes will be accommodated.

- 4) In Europe there is curbing or other **separation between bike paths and motor corridors**. This would be good here too.
- 5) The time scale is 2014. What about a **short-term solution**? We need to **restripe** the roads, deal with pot holes.

Ron: There is a chance for resurfacing next summer except for some areas in the bluffs. This will smooth the road, but may create some other problems such as drainage. We are hoping to put \$1.5 – 2 million in the next budget. If that happens, engineering can begin in the summer. July, 2012 might be possible for first phase of construction.

- 6) In the draft vision statement – would like **night sky** to be mentioned.
- 7) Concerned about **erosion** problems with the shoulders. How do you plan your budgets for **maintenance**? We want to be sure that the **bikeway** is not last as the road is resurfaced in the future.

Ron: Chip Reeves, public works, has been involved in the meetings. MaineDOT is responsible for maintenance of the corridor. MaineDOT may contract with Bar Harbor for some of the winter maintenance.

- 8) Good concerns and visions statements. Does this study consider all of the **resources along the corridor**?

Jim: The corridor is part of the Acadia All American Road. The **corridor plan** identifies many of these resources.

- 9) Very concerned about **preserving historic resources** such as Church of Our Father and the schoolhouse that are both on the historic register. A bike lane won't fit.

Ron: The group is working on alternatives that we hope will work. Another public meeting will allow people to review the proposals.

- 10) The corridor is not big enough to meet all of the needs along the corridor. We won't be able to do everything well here. We should look at the alternative of building a **bypass** around Hulls Cove that will accommodate more uses.

11) Is it possible to split the traffic at the head of the island, creating **two roads**. One road would be “efficient” and the other would be “scenic”.

Ron: We know that this is an issue. The committee will be working on whether one corridor will suffice.

Presentation of the corridor segment matrix

1) Suggestion we **add Church of Our Father and School House** to concerns under #10

2) Is it possible to **work Acadia National Park** on solutions?

Yes the park is a member of the planning team. We are looking at using the service road from Hulls Cove into the park for Bike-Ped use’

3) **Safety** comes up a lot in the matrix.

We need to encourage the engineers to design something that works for Hulls Cove to meet safety needs.

4) There is a significant amount of **school bus** traffic along the corridor. The school buses are slowing traffic movement. Should consider ways to avoid some of the conflicts, more bus pull-offs.

We cannot pass buses when the flashers are going. Once the kids are onboard, the bus will allow drivers to pass. We should involve schools and bus drivers to help in the plan.

5) Mixed use road systems are not always scenic. We need to look at what happens with amenities during the winter when it snows. Need a **winter maintenance** plan.

6) Like that the boxes are trying to move **bike and pedestrian off-road** wherever it is possible.

Ron: We will need to work with land owners to understand what they will agree-to.

7) There are several businesses that will benefit from town **sewer and water**. Is it possible to extend year round water and sewer up Ireson Hill?

Ron: Need to work with the Town to see what they can do. This is a town decision.

8) #5 Do you have rules about **approved uses**?

Ron: Common sense approach to avoid blocking access.

9) Can the **public meetings be held a little later** for people who work 8-5?

Ron: We will look into this.

10) How can we provide other ideas for the corridor **after this meeting**?

Ron: Email and phone are on the handout.

11) Is the planning process considering **safe places to stop** such as turnouts and bus stops?

Fred: We are looking at options for aesthetics. Night Sky preservation is under consideration. Larry Johannesman, MaineDOT Landscape Architect will assist in traffic calming and landscaping to encourage slower, more relaxed travel. Design will also need to accommodate multiple users. *NB: This answer was to a previous questions. We need to incorporate more specific consideration of safe pullout and other stops.*

12) Are **utilities** being considered in the plan?

Fred: We are discussing utilities, but some of this is the responsibility of the town. For instance, burying electrical lines is very costly. State and Federal funds are not currently available for burying cables. Some solutions my interest partners in contributing to their implementation.

13) Have we considered **traffic circles** and other traffic calming methods? In Europe traffic circles (roundabouts) have been used effectively to calm traffic. A traffic circle in Hulls Cove might help to manage traffic flow.

Jim, Fred: Landscaping and other visual cues can calm traffic. We haven't gotten to specific solutions yet.

14) What **trees** will we have at the end of this?

Ron: The committee will work with the design team. New trees may be part of the plan.

15) Would like to have a better **path to the beach** at Hulls Cove. Perhaps land or right of way can be acquired in this process.

16) If you have suggestions for **off-road bikeways**, please share them with the committee.

HCPC is building an interactive map online at the website www.hcpcme.org/barharbor

The corridor is divided into sections in part because solutions may vary among the sections.

This process will seek a balance between constituency needs.

17) Is there a systematic **analysis of traffic problems** along the corridor?

Fred: MaineDOT will look at friction points, safety, crash locations, traffic counts, turning movements and other quantitative measures.

18) Stress Point – trying to get out of **Church of Our Father** is difficult. Timing with the light at the head of the island results in delays.

Fred: Need to consider ways to design slower speed travel. Lower speed limits alone won't work.

19) **Speed** is a problem on the corridor.

20) How do we calm delivery and construction **trucks** coming down the corridor and other commercial vehicles?

21) In Mexico **speed bumps** are used to slow traffic.

22) This corridor has been part of the Town Councils goals for many years. The **Town Council thanks everyone** for turning out, the staff and committee members for their efforts. (Named committee members)

Meeting adjourned at 5:52 PM