

Town of Hampton



*Department of Resources and
Economic Development*



**Hampton Beach Area Commission
100 Winnacunnet Road
Hampton, New Hampshire 03842
Selectmen's Meeting Room – Town Hall
Special Meeting – June 16, 2016
4:00 PM**

MINUTES

In Attendance:

John Nyhan, Chairman, Town of Hampton Representative
Bill Watson, Vice Chairman-NH Department of Transportation
Fran McMahon, Rockingham Planning Commission
Rick Griffin, Town of Hampton Representative
Michael Housman, DRED Operations Supervisor
Robert Ladd, Hampton Beach Village District

Excused:

Bob Preston, Hampton Chamber of Commerce
Chuck Rage, Hampton Beach Village District
Dean Merrill, At Large

Absent: 0

Other: See last page for those in attendance
William Rose, NHDOT, Senior Planner
Gordon Leedy, VHB Project Planner
Jason Bachand, Town Planner
Anne Marchand, Secretary

Call to Order: The meeting was opened at 4:00 p.m.

Welcome and Introduction – John Nyhan, HBAC Chairman

Mr. Nyhan welcomed those in the audience and stated this Special HBAC meeting is a presentation and overview by DOT/VHB regarding the HBAC Transportation Grant including discussion of existing conditions, issues, and recommendations. Questions and discussion will follow the presentation. Mr.

Nyhan then introduced William Rose, NHDOT Senior Planner, and Project Manager, and Gordon Leedy, VHB Project Manager.

Mr. Nyhan also noted this is the third public meeting on the Master Plan Update.

William Rose, Senior NHDOT Planner, briefly reviewed and provided background on the Transportation Grant. He stated that program funds in the amount of \$375,000 were provided to update the transportation components of the Hampton Beach Master Plan. Further, that the HBAC requested NHDOT to manage the project on HBAC's behalf in 2012. The HBAC, NHDOT, and VHB are all working toward the same goals.

Mr. Rose reported that the first public meeting was held in June 2015, after traffic counts were collected by VHB during the summer of 2014. He noted there are social media accounts which are specific to this project and these were used to increase public input opportunities. The second public workshop in October included a workshop in which the public was involved. Since that October meeting, additional alternatives were identified by the public and HBAC and were analyzed. Additional scope was added to the VHB contract and meetings followed with Town Department heads and the Town Manager, as well as DRED representatives in Concord.

Mr. Rose stated that the intention for this meeting is to hear from Mr. Leedy the lay out of the final recommendations based on comments and feedback. The project is moving forward toward the HBAC considering recommendations for the entire project, consultation with respective constituents and consideration of proposed alternatives. Once the preferred alternatives are identified, further refinement of identified options will carry through to the engineering design process as far as funds will allow. This effort is working to align with NH Ten Year Plan funds for design and construction estimating \$9.2 million in funding in future years.

Senator Stiles commented that "sooner is better".

Mr. Nyhan stated that improvements and recommendations involving Ocean Boulevard are connected with working on reconstruction of the roadway, sidewalks and drainage. There is now \$9+ million in the budget and an entire reconstruction will cost approximately \$16 to \$17 million dollars. Currently, HBAC is working with money now available and money anticipated to come forth. The Commission will continue to seek federal funding and look at other funding sources to support the entire cost of the reconstruction.

Gordon Leedy, VHB Project Manager, reviewed the handout provided to the Commission which is the "Hampton Beach Transportation Master Plan Update dated June 16, 2016". This information will be on the Town of Hampton Web Site within the week. A Power Point presentation aided in his presentation and includes photographs, aerials, and plans showing travel lane options, bike lanes, shoulders, and sidewalks. Also shown were vehicle parking capacities and green areas.

Mr. Leedy pointed out the following while going through the Power Point information:

- The study area was expanded, which was authorized on 3/29/16.
- This expansion includes Ocean Boulevard North from Church Street to Winnacunnet Road.

- Existing Conditions Inventory included mapped sidewalks, bicycle and transit accommodations; mapped existing parking inventory; traffic data from NHDOT ATR Counts; and mapped environmental resources. This shows extending to bend in the road and there is an actual reduction from 4 lanes to two. He stated there is no need for 4 lanes and eliminating a single lane of traffic gives room for parking, bike lanes and pedestrian accommodations. He also noted this would bring the road up to modern standards.
- Parking currently existing consists of 274 spaces with proposed parking at 346 spaces in the expanded area.
- Ocean Boulevard North (Alternative 2) shows 136 parking spaces with 156 proposed spaces.
- A second alternative for Ocean Boulevard North shows 136 existing spaces, with 173 proposed.
- Ocean Boulevard North Section has drawings of a typical section north of Boar's Heads with a proposal to include grass, sidewalks, parallel parking, bike lanes, travel lanes (2) and second bike lane and parallel parking. The second option shows a different perspective. He also noted that the roadway is insufficient as are sidewalk widths with no ADA capabilities and limited crossings.
- Ashworth Avenue, Alternative B2. This would provide two-way traffic; one lane north bound, with lanes southbound and sidewalks on both sides with signal control at Ocean Boulevard. Drawings with greenery were also provided.
- Ashworth Avenue, Alternative 1 shows provision for 2 lanes, one way south bound with sidewalks and bike lanes with a signal at Ocean Boulevard.
- Ashworth Avenue, Alternative 2 provides two-way traffic with a center turn lane and sidewalks on both sides with signal control at Ocean Boulevard.
- Alternatives also extend the heavy use area to Boar's Head and an identified site for an additional bath house.
- A round-about at Winnacunnet Road - 140 feet in diameter- was also proposed. He noted that they tested travel in the round-about with a semi-truck, which went through without a problem.
- Corner of Church Street – more detail is required in that area as there is not a lot of width.
- Need 250 to 300 feet for left hand turn on to Winnacunnet and need same for south bound right turn que.
- With information on traffic volumes, it is anticipated there is more than an acceptable level for service on the intersection.
- The amount of pavement would be reduced which helps with drainage issues. Limited options with what can happen with drainage. This area is in the flood plain and will flood.
- After reviewing original plan alternatives, it was determined that if there is any improvement to Ashworth Avenue, it needs to be to fix the sidewalks.
- Ocean Boulevard South – Not enough sidewalk and, in some places, no sidewalk. A 5 foot sidewalk is a challenge for the 1500 pedestrians per hour.
- Sidewalks are in desperate need for improvement, - ADA compliance and safety issues.
- Traffic congestion is caused, in part, by pedestrian issues with pedestrians crossing wherever.
- Something has to go – parking or a traffic lane (Ocean Boulevard)

Mr. Leedy stated he is confident Ocean Boulevard can be one lane and still handle the traffic, if Ashworth is made two lane. There would also be more options for traffic exiting the beach. There are a number of options, but to keep traffic moving, a significant amount of parking on the Boulevard would have to be eliminated. There could be enough pavement to handle two lanes on Ocean Boulevard which would be used to handle emergencies.

Police Chief Sawyer and Fire Chief Ayotte both brought up the safety of pedestrians crossing three lanes on Ashworth Avenue.

Mr. Bridle stated he cannot see dropping Ocean Boulevard to one lane in that, to be functional, it needs two lanes. Further, to work right, the 76 DRED parking spaces need to be dropped. He also stated that losing a lane between the Casino and Haverhill Street is a public safety issue.

Mr. Rice said there is enough parking, but it is not where the people want it. People want to park at the beach, and not everyone can park there. He suggested looking at the overall numbers, not counting the Seafood Festival, and also that there is more than enough parking at the State Park lot in that it is only 60% utilized. He also noted that in earlier discussions, loading and unloading was the entire argument against having Ashworth Avenue two way.

Mr. Leedy stated that heading northbound from Seabrook, have to go through main part of the beach which adds to the traffic issues on Ocean Boulevard, including driver frustration. This is not a good situation and by dealing with Ashworth Avenue as two-way, take takes some difficulties and recirculation off the table.

Mr. Bridle stated that Brown Avenue would a bottleneck if no traffic lights as people are waiting to turn.

Ms. Hale stated that Fire and Police need to get out at Brown Avenue and is difficult with traffic coming from south to north.

Mr. Leedy stated options presented enable people to get out of the beach. Chief Ayotte stated there was a study which took into consideration the outbound traffic; however there are public safety issues.

Chief Sawyer also commented on public safety issues questioning how the fire and police can get out of the stations do their jobs. He also commented that during the Seafood Festival, the parking works because of the shuttling and traffic control.

Mr. Rice pointed out that the north bound traffic on Ocean Boulevard has been bumper to bumper for more than 70 years. Now, the situation existing for years is unhealthy with a significant downside.

Mr. Leedy commented that police traffic control by the Casino helps and may want to consider barriers which would channel pedestrians.

Mr. Nyhan asked if additional parking would be viable if Ocean Boulevard went to four lanes. Mr. Leedy said that half the parking would be lost and if had four lanes with sidewalk on the west side, people would had to cross over four lanes from the beach.

Chief Ayotte said he sees no changes in how to remove people from the area.

Mr Leedy said there is the option that keeps the traffic patterns the same as they are today and if do two lanes northbound and southbound, would then have to deal with parking and loss of revenue from parking.

Mr. Nyhan noted the discussion of DRED losing parking spaces was discussed at a DRED meeting, and the State Park Manager said that it would be necessary to juggle parking spaces so there would be no loss of revenue.

Mr. Waddell stated there are too many cars at the beach. It is cash cow problem and the basic problems must be dealt with.

Mr. Leedy commented there will have to be compromise and a solution must be found that everyone can live with. Today, the conditions are awful.

Senator Stiles asked if there may be a way to have a pull off by the hotel.

Mr. Bridle said everyone wants to see the roadways, etc. brought up to their potential, but one must consider the fire and police department locations and entry and exit problems for the departments. He doesn't want to make these problems worse. He would also like to see sidewalks done, but making Ashworth Avenue three lines is detrimental to public safety.

Mr. Nyhan stated that the HBAC has been working with the State Parks keeping Ocean Boulevard two lanes northbound with expanded sidewalks which would then eliminate parking on the east side of Ocean Boulevard.

Mr. Griffin state that most pedestrians would use channel fencing for crossing noting that from State Park to Ashworth, people do not always use the crosswalks.

Mr. Bridle pointed out a curb will assist with drainage issues as the curb would allow water to be stopped and collected.

Mr. Nyhan stated that the HBAC Commissioners will work through the summer taking ideas and suggestions made this evening and putting them all together, especially the area from Boar's Head to Winnacunnet. In September, the HBAC will meet and, in the meantime, the Commissioners will go back to their various organizations (Planning Board, Town Departments, Rockingham Planning Council, Hampton Beach Village District, DRED, DOT, etc) and work through the ideas. Once all the information is assembled, then the Project will move on to the next step – the engineering design.

Mr. Bridle applauded the efforts of the HBAC, especially the portion from Boar's Head to Winnacunnet. He suggested looking to put a rest-room area somewhere between the Boar's Head to Winnacunnet area.

Mr. Leedy stated that DRED has stated it is interested in another site for an additional bath house half way between High Street and Winnacunnet.

Mr. Griffin commented that the plan is outstanding and it is not what he expected to see. He stated this opens possibilities for more green space and improved sidewalks. This is a different concept which looks

more attractive. He also stated that the round-about at Boar's Head was not met with favor, but the round-about at Winnacunnet is a good idea. This concept improves the whole neighborhood.

**The meeting concluded at 5:35 pm
No motions were made or votes taken.**

**Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Marchand, Secretary**

**THANK YOU CHANNEL 22 - This Public Meeting
will be televised on Channel 22. Check date/time
Listings on Town Web Site.**

In attendance:

Jamie Sullivan, Acting Town Manager
Jamie Ayotte, Hampton Fire Chief
Richard Sawyer, Hampton Police Chief
David Hobbs, Deputy Hampton Police Chief
Jennifer Hale, Deputy DPW Director

Senator Nancy Styles
Fred Rice

Selectmen:
Rusty Bridle, Chairman
Jim Waddell, Vice Chairman
Rick Griffin (HBAC Commissioner)

Planning Board:
Ann Carnaby
Mark Cole
Fran McMahon (HBAC Commissioner)

And 6 interested residents.