

# Capitol Region Council of Governments

241 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106

## Route 195 Advisory Committee Meeting *Hicks Memorial Municipal Center – Community Room*

**October 23, 2008**

**7:30 PM**

### **Committee Members**

Kevin Bouley, Chair  
Marilee Beebe-Kostrun  
Fred Daniels  
Steve Werbner  
Kathy Bach  
Barbara Cook  
Harvey Gilbert  
Steve Beeching

### **Organization**

Tolland Economic Development Commission  
Tolland Planning & Zoning Commission  
Tolland Town Council  
Tolland Town Manager  
Historical Society/Museum Director  
Tolland Historic District Commission  
Tolland Town Council  
Resident (Town Green) & Business Owner

### **Others**

Dave Smith  
Grayson Wright  
Jeffrey Hunter  
Linda Farmer

Tolland Town Engineer  
ConnDOT  
ConnDOT  
Tolland Town Planner

### **Project Team**

Tom Maziarz  
Emily Moos  
Lia Huang  
Steve O'Neill  
Ryan Malloy

CRCOG  
CRCOG  
CRCOG  
VHB  
VHB

### **Public Attendees**

Rod Hurtuk  
Marjorie Hurtuk  
Jack Summers  
Karen Kramer  
Christine Gray  
Arthur Gottier  
Judy Gottier

Tolland Green Historic District Commission  
Resident  
Resident  
Resident  
Resident; Tolland Green Historic District Commission  
Resident  
Resident

***Meeting Purpose:*** Route 195 Corridor Study – Regular Meeting of the Advisory Committee to discuss draft composite plan for the town green portion of RT 195.

### **1. Welcome & Adoption of Minutes:**

Kevin Bouley opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and leading introductions. Mr. Bouley also called for adoption of the June 23, 2008 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Kathy Bach, seconded by Fred Daniels, to accept the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

## 2. Recap of June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting and progress report:

Tom Maziarz reported on the findings of the June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting by stating that the following recurring themes were taken away from the discussion and into consideration when developing the draft composite plan:

- Maintaining the character of the Green
- Enhancing the ability of the Green to serve community functions as a safe and comfortable place for people and families – the Green is the community’s “front lawn”
- Slowing traffic on the Green
- Diverting traffic from the Green, if possible, should remain a topic for future discussion

## 3. Presentation of composite plan based on June 23<sup>rd</sup>

Tom Maziarz gave a presentation on all of the elements of the draft composite plan for the town green portion of Route 195.

**Route 74/Old Stafford Intersection.** The plan includes a roundabout for this intersection. Mr. Maziarz reported that a roundabout provides the good level of service for the intersection of Old Stafford Road and Route 74. Maziarz also indicated that this option would be extremely effective at calming the traffic coming into the Green.

Mr. Maziarz noted that a roundabout results in the loss of 5200 square feet of the north Green (total area of north Green = 25,791 sf). It would also result in a small loss of buffer space in front of one house to the north of the roundabout, and a gain in buffer space to the properties on the western side of the Green in this area.

**Route 195/Route 74 Intersection.** A realigned and unsignalized T-intersection is proposed for this location. A stop sign will be included on the Route 74 westbound approach. The unsignalized intersection provides a provides n overall good level of service with a small amount of delay to the Route 74 westbound approach (LOS = D). It also creates a very pedestrian friendly environment at the center of the Green and makes the Green much more accessible for pedestrians.

The intersection results in a net gain of 5400 sf to the Green as a whole. The intersection also has small and generally positive impacts on properties along the Green. The museum property on the east side of the Green will lose a small amount of buffer space along the carriage road, but will gain buffer space along Route 74. Properties along the western side of the green will gain buffer space with this option.

**Traffic Calming.** The traffic calming elements include treatments at the entry points to the village to slow traffic before it enters the village. It also includes numerous elements within the village to keep traffic speeds low.

At the northern entry point the roundabout will serve as a very effective traffic calming method. At the eastern entry, the unsignalized T-intersection (with a stop sign for Route 74 westbound vehicles) will also be an effective traffic calming treatment. At the southern entry point (Route 195 at Old Post) the existing signalized intersection is not totally effective. It was proposed to create a new gateway further south at Cider Mill Road at such time as a signal is installed there.

Traffic calming elements within the village include textured pedestrian crosswalks, curb bump-outs, speed humps on the carriage road, reduced road width in certain areas, and on-street parking in some areas.

**Summary of Major Changes.** Some of the more significant changes resulting from the proposed composite plan are:

- The north end of the Green will lose 5,200 sf out of a total 25,791
- The central Green area will most likely become the focus area for community events as it gains 5,400 square feet and a better pedestrian environment
- The net change to the entire Green is negligible at +200 square feet
- There will be less traffic delay throughout the Green area
- There will be safer traffic operations throughout the Green area
- There will be slower traffic throughout the Green area

#### **4. Public Comment**

Midge Hurtuk stated that introducing a roundabout at the northern end of the Green severely impacts the functionality of the north Green. Ms. Hurtuk stated that the narrow 12' strip of green remaining after cutting into the north Green with the roundabout will not be enough Green space to maintain the connection from the south part of the north Green to the north part of the north Green.

Rod Hurtuk, stated that he still feels that if a roundabout is moved forward as an alternative it does not belong at the northern end of the Green, but rather in the central Green.

A committee member questioned why the option of narrowing the roadway at the northern end of the Green was not studied further as an alternative to introducing a roundabout.

Tom Maziarz and another committee member responded by stating that while narrowing the road in this area might calm the traffic, it would not solve the traffic backups on Old Stafford Road. The committee member went on to state that from his personal experience, Old Stafford Road can see significant delays in the morning peak period between 7 am and 8 am during which time cars begin to seek other, sometimes unsafe ways of avoiding the intersection.

Another committee member pointed out that while this study is trying to alleviate current traffic flow issues on the Green, it is also trying to look into the future and solve any potential issues that might occur at 2030 volumes.

Midge Hurtuk requested a clarification on the definition of Level of Service (LOS) and what the grades A-F were based upon.

Tom Maziarz explained that A-F grades were meant to represent the average delays people experience at an intersection or on a roadway. Steve O'Neill noted that a LOS F stands for average delays of 60 seconds and that as delays increase driver tend to become more aggressive and take higher risks. Mr. Maziarz stressed that 60 seconds is the average and that many cars might experience far more than 60 second delays at an intersection operating at LOS F.

Midge Hurtuk asked if higher delays at a particular intersection should also mean a higher rate of accidents. If so, she stated that there does not appear to be a high rate of accidents at this particular intersection.

Steve O'Neill stated that accident rate and level of service do not necessarily have a direct correlation, rather the potential risk for an accident has a correlation to level of service.

Arthur Gottier asked if a 3-way stop at the Route 74 – Stafford Road intersection had been considered as a traffic calming device.

Mr. Maziarz stated that an all-way stop would probably not be approved on a state roadway. If it were implemented, it would likely result in poor levels of service on the other approaches. Steve O'Neil added that placing stop signs on both directions of Route 74 would create traffic back-ups on those approaches.

One member of the public inquired about bike lanes along the Green and whether they are being considered.

Tom Maziarz responded saying that the proposed shoulders are 3 feet.

Rod Hurtuk stated that a representative for the church on the Green had intended to come to the meeting, but was not in attendance. He said on behalf of that representative that a T-intersection at that portion of the Green seemed cumbersome for the large congregation of church attendees (300-500 per Sunday service) as the day care facility that uses the church parking lot.

## **5. Concept Discussion by the Advisory Committee**

A committee member stressed that the traffic calming improvements proposed in advance of the southern entry (Cider Mill Rd to Old Post Rd) to the Green should be done at the other two entry points. Two other entry points are: (1) the northern entry or Route 74 southbound from the hardware store to Old Stafford, and (2) the eastern entry or Route 74 WB from the elderly housing facility to the carriage road.

A committee member mentioned that she is now convinced that a T-intersection will be a positive improvement for the central Green, but that it seems that the major improvements cannot be discussed separately because they all depend upon one another

Tom Maziarz clarified that from a traffic calming perspective, the T-intersection must work in conjunction with a roundabout at the northern end of the Green, but from a LOS perspective, the T-intersection functions well on its own.

Another committee member stated that one advantage of this draft composite plan is the enhanced connectivity between the north Green and the south Green. At the present time, the community does not choose to have functions on the north Green as often as on the south Green. With these improvements, the community may also begin to utilize the north Green.

Another committee member wondered how close the T-intersection option in the central Green would come to needing a dedicated turn lane.

Tom Maziarz responded by stating that the town should be able to keep the single lane into the future and can possibly implement a bypass lane as volumes increase on this road. He noted that the town is still at least two years from seeing any improvements begin to take place on this road and at that time the town will work with a roadway designer from the DOT.

A member of the committee asked for clarification on the road width west of the Green.

Tom Maziarz responded saying that the road width on the western edge of the Green is 28 feet.

Another committee member asked whether the DOT representatives in the room could weigh in on the alternatives and issues being discussed in this composite plan.

Grayson Wright of the DOT stated that it would be premature for anyone from DOT to make comments at this point in the study process.

The committee chairman asked if there was a consensus about some if not all of the concepts presented this evening.

A committee member stated that as going to the public is the next step, the public should be presented with two alternatives for the Town Green portion of the study – one with a roundabout and one with a T-Intersection at the northern end of the Green.

Tom Maziarz stated that the project team could come up with two alternative plans, one which is very similar to this evening’s plan and a second which incorporates a signalized T-Intersection.

Another committee member asked whether the problems with the T-intersection at the northern end of the Green involving headlight glare could be addressed if that option were chosen.

Tom Maziarz responded saying that through refining the design, these problems could be addressed.

A committee member found the traffic simulation of Route 195 at Route 74 helpful. He asked if it could be done for the intersection (or roundabout) of Route 74 and Old Stafford.

Tom Maziarz responded saying that the project team will look into the possibility of performing this task.

***Motion.*** Merilee Beebe-Kostrun made a motion and Kathy Bach seconded the motion stating that the committee ultimately directed the project team to prepare two overall concept plans for the next public meeting to include the following:

1. A roundabout at the northern end of the Green (Route 74 at Old Stafford), a T-intersection at the center of the Green (Route 74 at Route 195) and traffic calming features throughout the Green area as well as before all approaches to the Green
2. A plan similar to #1, but with a signalized T-intersection at the north end rather than a roundabout.

## **6. Next Steps:**

- The Project Team will work on providing two composite plans, one very similar to tonight’s plan and one that features a signalized T-intersection at the RT 74 – Old Stafford Road intersection.
- The Project Team will also assess traffic calming options for the northern entry and eastern entry to the Green.
- The project Team will also look into the possibility of developing the traffic simulations video for the intersection of Route 74 and Old Stafford Rd.
- The next meeting will be a public meeting sometime in between the November and December holidays.

## **7. Other Business**

There was no other business

## **8. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.