**Central York County Connections Study**

**Steering Committee Meeting**

**August 6, 2012 11:00 – 2:00**

**York County Community College**

*In attendance*: Charles Andreson, Town of Sanford; Bradford Littlefield, Town of Sanford; John Sylvester, Town of Alfred; Judy Bernstein, Town of Kennebunk; Myranda McGowen, SMRPC; Stephen Rolle, Parsons Brinkerhoff; Sara Devlin, Maine Turnpike Authority; Gerry Audibert, MDOT; Tom Errico, TY Lin; Carol Morris and Scott Hastings, Morris Communications.

The meeting began at 3:08 pm.

Carol opened the meeting and after a discussion of attendance and schedules it was decided not to follow Steve’s handout but rather to start with the Route 99 and Kennebunk Exit 25 Area.

**Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for Route 99 and Kennebunk Exit 25 Area**

**New Connection between Route 99 and Route 35**

Construct a new roadway connecting Route 35 with Route 99 in Kennebunk, including a new bridge over the Cat Mousam River. Two potential alignments have been identified; (Option 1) Intersect Route 35 at the current Route 35 (Alewive Rd)/Alfred Road intersection and cross the river just north of the I-95 bridge, or (Option 2) extend Alewive Park Rd to Alfred Road, and continue across the river to Route 99.

The new connection is forecast to attract about 9,200 daily trips. Most of these divert from Alfred Road/Mill St (about 4,500) or Main St (3,600), thought the more direct connection would attract an estimated 1,100 additionally daily trips from the Sanford area.

* Benefits: Creates a more direct connection between Rte. 99, Rte. 35, and Maine Turnpike exit 25. Reduces traffic through the center of West Kennebunk (50 percent reduction in traffic on Alfred Road, 80 percent reduction on Mill St). Reduces traffic on Route 1 in downtown Kennebunk (17 percent). Additional river crossing improves local circulation in Kennebunk. Economic analysis conducted previously indicated a positive BC ratio.
* Costs: Approximately $7.6M to $7.9M.
* Natural and physical resources potentially impacted: Option 1 would require reconfiguration of the access and parking area at Corning. Option 2 passes near a recreational field. Both options would introduce a new river crossing and pass through undeveloped habitat areas near the river.
* Implementation timeframe: Long-term.

*Steve presents graphics showing a New Route 35 to Route 99 Connection*

John Sylvester: Who is going to fix Rte. 99?

Gerry: It was paved recently.

Steve: Also bear in mind while 1,800 additional trips is a large number, it’s not incompatible with the characteristics of the road.

Brad Littlefield: Why do think this would reduce the traffic of off Alfred Road in West Kennebunk because they have to come all the way out of south Sanford down Rte. 99.

Steve: Today some people are already using this route, right? So if that connection is improved, we’d expect even more users. Again, this is projected out 25 years.

Judy Bernstein: You are not presuming that because it would be slightly easier that might generate the additional traffic.

Tom Errico: That’s what it is. The connection to the turnpike becomes improved and people make different choices on the routing they use to get wherever they are going. And so by making that connection it’s easier, it’s less time. Most likely those 1,800 additional vehicles are coming from some other route from Sanford.

Judy: I guess what I’m not clear on why the reduction from Main St. in downtown Kennebunk.

Steve: That could be traffic that now has to go down into town and circle back up the opposite side of the river.

Tom: Another thing is you could be on the north side of town and today maybe you would go through town and get on 99 and head to Sanford and now maybe you find it easier to take the new connection.

Judy: So the impacts are slightly different in terms of the river crossing and the amount of wetlands between the two options?

Steve: It is looking like there are a little more wetlands affected in option 1 rather than option 2. Our environmental consultant is looking into it now.

Gerry: We were told this morning by the advisory committee that the industrial park segment right of way does currently exist?

Judy: The owners of that land have a multiphase plan for that land but it connects through if they continue their phasing plan. But they haven’t moved past phase 2 of a 5 phase plan so we will have to see. I was looking at the intersection of the proposed connection to Rte. 99. How does that intersection work with the turnpike there, does it have the standard sightlines?

Steve: It is located far enough from the turnpike to have good sightlines.

Gerry: I would like to put things in perspective for a minute. These are concepts. That certainly looks like a practical option but whether or not it’s the best one we don’t know. Also money is tight. Probably we do nothing unless we get a lot of community push for it and that is true not only for this one but for any of the other highway improvements. Money is tight, so it is going to be competitive. I am not saying DOT won’t do anything but just because we are presenting it here does not mean we are definitely going to fund it. These are preliminary findings and after your input and public input we will put together a draft report which will have some final recommendations.

Carol: We did an analysis of the region and identified where there was need and where there wasn’t need. This may not be an immediate need but could be a good thing in the future. Is it something people will be screaming to do? Probably not, but maybe in the future yes, so this will be good groundwork.

Gerry: This might lend itself to some grant opportunities. This coupled with some other community upgrades might look good to grant providers.

Judy: I assume you first looked at Mill Street and eliminated any possibility of expanding it to meet this demand.

Steve: Yes, the problem with Mill Street is that it is very residential in character. You could widen it some, the bridge would need to be rebuilt at some point and this intersection would have to be redone.

Tom: And there is quite a grade on that road.

Carol: Also we didn’t feel that routing all this traffic through an area you are trying to redevelop as a village would be very attractive.

Judy: I am just worried that when we try and get money to fix the Mill Street Bridge we will be told that there is this new option and we will not get money to fix the Mill Street Bridge.

Gerry: It is true that if we built a new bridge the Mill St. Bridge might be considered to be redundant.

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for Route 111/202 Corridor (Biddeford – Sanford)***

**Passing Lanes**

Traffic volumes on the Route 111 corridor are highest to the east in Arundel and Biddeford. In Arundel, the two-lane highway section operates at Level of Service (LOS) E conditions in the peak direction of travel during the PM peak period today (westbound), while all other two-lane segments operate at LOS D. By 2035, both directions in Arundel and westbound traffic in Lyman, Alfred and Sanford are projected to degrade to LOS E conditions. The poor level of service is largely driven by lack of passing opportunities during peak periods. Passing lanes provide opportunities to pass slower moving traffic and could maintain LOS C to D conditions through 2035 on the corridor.

A total of two passing lane segments are recommended in each direction. Preferred passing lane locations have relatively few driveways and cross streets (especially those requiring left turns) and are a minimum of 1/2-mile in length. As practical, they should be located exiting from built up areas or speed zones. Recommended locations on the Route 111 corridor are:

* Westbound starting at Route 35 (Lyman) and extending 1-mile to east of Kennebunk Pond Road (currently programmed for construction).
* Westbound New Road (Arundel) to Drew’s Mill Road (0.5 miles), as recommended in prior Route 111 study.
* Eastbound EITHER starting at Howitt Road (Lyman) and extending 1-mile east to beyond Boulder Lane, OR starting near Down/Clark/Blueberry Lane (Alfred) and extending 1-mile east to near Graves Road (Lyman), as recommended in prior Route 111 study.
* Eastbound from Route 35 extending 1-mile to near Thompson/Trout Brook Road, as recommended in the prior Route 111 study.

Should any of the segments between Route 35 and Biddeford prove infeasible in the future, other potential viable passing lane options are:

* Thompson/Trout Brook Road to Hill Road.
* Hill Rd to Limerick Road.
* Limerick Rd to New Road.

While full shoulders (8 feet) do not need to be provided in the direction of the passing lane, adequate paved shoulders should be maintained for safety purposes and to allow for bicycle use. Five-foot minimum shoulders are therefore recommended adjacent to passing lanes.

* Benefits: Allows traffic to pass slower moving vehicles, reduced delay and improved travel reliability; improved peak level of service to LOS C/D (from projected LOS E in 2035); reduces incidence of head-on collisions.
* Costs and impacts: Approximately $2.2 million per mile.
* Natural and physical resources potentially impacted: Could be accommodated within existing right-of-way, but may require modification of access at some locations (e.g. driveway relocations or adjustments).
* Implementation timeframe: Near to mid-term. Segments east of Route 35 are the most congested are merit initial consideration.

Brad: We had talked about a right turn lane onto Hill Road. Would that affect the potential passing lane near there?

Gerry: That is still a potential and it would not affect the passing lane.

Brad: At any section, would there be a passing lane in both directions, so would there ever be a four-lane road?

Steve: No, when you get into four lane roads you start running into additional issues and you need more right of way.

John Sylvester: In this area the Route 4 bridge needs work and when bridges here need work traffic gets detoured to Grammar Road, which can’t handle it. Is there anything in the plans to work on the Route 4 bridge?

Steve: That is an excellent point. In this study we didn’t focus on maintenance and preservation. But a mention of these issues could go in the report

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for Route 111/202 Corridor (Biddeford – Sanford)***

**Center and Edge-Line Rumble Strips on Route 111/202**

Route 111/202 has the highest rate of head-on crashes of major highways within the CYCCS study area, and a relatively high rate of run off the road crashes. Add rumble strips on Route 111/Route 202 corridor at the center line (double yellow line locations only) and edge line. Edge lines should be located under the painted edge line, or immediately adjacent to preserve shoulder width for use by bicyclists. Rumble strips should be avoided in more densely populated areas, and are not recommended where the posted speed is 35 mph or under.

* Benefits: Reduces incidence of head-on collisions (center rumble strip) and run off the road crashes or crashes related to over-correction (edge line).
* Cost: Minimal cost.
* Natural and physical resources potentially impacted: Increased noise for abutters when vehicles cross center or edge line, which can be minimized by temporarily interrupting rumble strips in front of residential properties that are located near the roadway and in more densely developed areas.
* Implementation timeframe: Near-term (with next scheduled line painting maintenance).

Steve: We got some push back this morning at the AC meeting over the concern of noise impacts for nearby residents. Certainly you want to develop these in less developed areas. So we would like some feedback from you about them.

John: Do them.

Judy: How much noise do they make?

Brad: Quite a bit. Do you put these in High speed areas?

Gerry: These would be in high-speed areas where there are a lot of head-on and inattentive driver crashes. They would not be put in on the center lane in a passing zone.

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for Route 202.***

**Reconstruct Route 202 near Goodall Hospital**

The existing crest on Route 202 at the entrance to the Sanford Hospital impacts sight distance for westbound vehicles turning into or existing the hospital. This is compounded by the lack of a left turn pocket, which means turning traffic must slow or come to a stop in the through travel lane.

Reconstruction of the roadway to create a left turn pocket and minor regrading of the vertical profile to improve sight distance and separate turning traffic is recommended. The two existing driveways should be consolidated to a single driveway, with the easternmost entrance closed or restricted to right-turn in/out only. Additional access is provided to June Street. A walkway is recommended on the south side of the highway bordering the hospital property.

* Benefits: Reduce potential for crashes at the Sanford Hospital; improve access to the hospital, extend pedestrian network.
* Costs and impacts: TBD.
* Natural and physical resources potentially impacted: Some grading may affect undeveloped areas of adjacent parcels. Walkway may require some undeveloped hospital property bordering the roadway.
* Implementation timeframe: Longer-term. This is a lower priority improvement, as the location is not a current high crash location. This improvement could be deferred until major maintenance/reconstruction of the roadway is needed.

Brad: The first driveway headed into Sanford is already for emergency vehicles only, though it is not signed as such on the road. The sidewalks there may not be of much value here. If people are walking they generally use the June Street entrance. It is more direct to the populated areas of town and leads directly to the main door.

Charlie Andreson: The DOT looked at this intersection in 2007 but the project was cancelled before implementation.

Steve: So should the recommendation be more generic: ‘Dust off the ’07 plan’?

Charlie: It certainly should be considered.

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for Route 202.***

**Reconstruct Route 202 between Brook Street and River Street**

This segment of US Route 202 is a narrow, downhill stretch of two-lane highway entering central Sanford. Sidewalks are poorly defined and utility poles are located on the edge of the south side of the roadway (in front of the sidewalk). The right-of-way is constrained to 40 feet here, and abutting houses are located close to the roadway.

(Option 1) Per applicable standards, the current 40-foot right-of-way allows for five foot wide sidewalks directly abutting the highway, with two eleven foot travel lanes and four foot shoulders. Further narrowing is not recommended due to truck use of the corridor, the grade, and to allow space for bicyclists. In either case, raised curbs would provide better separation of pedestrians and traffic. Utilities should be relocated underground (preferred) or on the sidewalk (maintaining a minimum four-foot clear walk zone). This approach would not allow for the introduction of landscaping or street trees, though decorative period street lighting and other hardscaping such as colored crosswalks at River Street and Brook Street could potentially be incorporated into the design.

(Option 2) Introducing street trees or other landscaping here would help establish a gateway into town and better buffer both pedestrians and adjacent residences from the highway. However, a right-of-way acquisition of six additional feet would be necessary to provide space needed to establish a planting strip between the sidewalk and roadway. While adjacent dwellings would not be directly impacted, a three-foot taking on either side of the roadway would further reduce front yard sizes and necessitate reconstructing a number of private retaining walls. The resulting 46-foot right-of-way would allow this segment to be reconfigured as a gateway to the town, with the following elements:

* Two 15-foot travel lanes (same as existing)
* 8-foot sidewalk/planting strip on each side of the roadway. The increased width would better separate pedestrians from traffic, create a more visually appealing gateway, and allow for plantings that would have a traffic calming effect. Street trees could be introduced in four-foot wide tree wells, or a continuous four-foot wide planting strip.
* Utility poles should be located in line with the landscaping strip, or (preferable) located underground for this segment. If above ground wires are maintained, street tree selection should be limited to shorter, decorative varieties.
* Benefits: Improved definition of vehicle, bicycle (shoulder) and pedestrian (sidewalk) space. Removal of obstructions from the edge of the roadway. Improved separation of travel way and sidewalk, especially under Option 2. Landscaping under Option 2 would further provide some traffic calming effect and improved visual appearance, forming an eastern gateway to town.
* Costs: TBD.
* Natural and physical resources potentially impacted: Option 1 would be constructed within the existing right-of-way. Utility connections to abutting properties would need to be relocated if utilities are undergrounded. Option 2 would require acquisition of three feet of right-of-way from front yards of abutting properties. Several yards have short retaining walls that would need to be replaced or modified.
* Implementation timeframe: Mid- to Longer-term. Potential candidate for grant funded programs. Should be coordinated with Route 202/River Street intersection improvements.

Brad: That is one of the oldest parts of town, lots of obsolete, multifamily homes. There are a lot of families and a school there. There is going to be people in the street on bikes. We are a bike-friendly city and are trying to continue to be. That is a gateway to the city and we would like to be able to bury the utility cables through there.

Steve: We focused on this block because it is so constrained; anything you can do on this block you can carry onto adjacent segments. 15 foot lanes are well suited for bikes. It provides a 4-foot shoulder if you paint a white shoulder line.

Brad: If you need space, do we really need sidewalks on both sides?

Steve: You really want them. It’s a residential area with potential for pedestrian activity.

Charlie: We need five feet between the utility poles and the retaining walls, so you can’t move them closer in.

Steve: In Option 2, you could put them in the landscaped portion.

Charlie: Who would pay to move them?

Gerry: The project would. This is not a cheap project. Money is tight as we all know, but this is a great project for grant solicitation and collaboration. The report from this project will come up with recommendations but they will not be funded - it would require the town to submit a proposal.

Charlie: DOT is going to have to work on this road soon anyway. If we do nothing but fix it within the existing right away and redo the sidewalks, beautify it. It’s expensive but you guys have to do it anyway. How much pavement can I keep putting over the sidewalks?

Gerry: From what I understand, we are reconstructing 35 miles of highway statewide in the next two years, so there is not a lot going on.

Charlie: I understand that but at some point something has to happen. If we don’t expand the scope of this beyond the existing right of way and just refresh it, it will look brand new. That will be a huge improvement as far as the community is concerned. If none of these projects get built for 35 years I think we are all wasting our time. I think we need a mechanism for trying to get these projects moving along.

Carol: Sanford has been much more successful than many other towns in getting grant money and working the process. We’re saying that this project has all the earmarks of being a partnership.

Charlie: I agree but if we expand the design too much it will never get funded because it will cost too much.

Gerry: True and we are not going to do anything more than the town wants us to do. And when it comes time, sometime in the future, I don’t know when, we will come in here and fix it up.

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for Route 202.***

**Reconstruct Route 202/River Street intersection**

Widen intersection to create left turn pockets on Route 202 at the intersection. Ensure safe pedestrian crossings are included in the intersection improvements Benefits: Increased capacity at Route 202/River Street. Reduced potential for crashes on US Route 202 due to separation of left turning traffic.

* Costs: TBD
* Natural and physical resources potentially impacted: Would require 52-foot right-of-way, likely requiring the taking of the property on the northeast corner of the intersection and undeveloped land on the northwest corner. Based on aerial photography, a two to four foot strip of property would be needed to the northwest, while a wider 12-foot strip would be needed to the northeast (taking the existing three story building). The historic eligibility of the northeast property (currently vacant) will be investigated.
* Implementation timeframe: Medium-term to long-term. This is a moderate priority improvement, but the potential right-of-way needed on the northwest property should be preserved should abutting properties redevelop (approximately 2 feet needed on the northwest side, and up to 12 feet on the northeast side.

Brad: We had a private individual who negotiated a deal with the owner of the property on the corner there so that we would work with them to buy it and tear it down with the intention on improving the safety of that intersection, maybe with a roundabout. The town council sees it as a safety issue and feels they should work with the DOT on this.

Gerry: Safety projects are traditionally limited to half a million which isn’t a lot of money; it isn’t enough for a roundabout.

Charlie: If DOT shows some interest in fixing that intersection, not necessarily a roundabout, the town would feel able to act on the issue.

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for the Route 111, Exit 32 Interchange.***

**Biddeford Route 111 to Exit 32 interchange connector**

*Steve presents graphics showing Partial Exit 32 Connection (southbound off only) and Full Exit 32 Connection (southbound off, northbound and southbound on)*

Expand the Exit 32 interchange and construct a new connecting highway north of Route 111 to allow traffic destined for Sanford, Alfred, Lyman and other points north/west of I-95 to avoid the Route 111/Precourt intersection.

Two options have been identified. A Partial Exit 32 Connection would involve construction of the new highway corridor north of Route 111 in the Biddeford Crossing area and a connection from the SB off ramp only. A second option – Full Exit 32 Connection – would reconfigure the interchange to include access from the new connecting highway to the southbound onramp and northbound onramp as well. This second option may not be feasible unless MTA toll collection systems evolve to not require tollbooths at ramps (e.g. – all electronic tolling or mainline only tolling). The options could potentially be phased (partial implemented initially, and the full connection at a later time).

Under either option, the southbound channelization from Exit 32 could be modified to allow two dedicated left turn lanes, two through lanes, and a single right turn lane, since either option would divert much of the former right-turning traffic to the new connector roadway.

* *Benefits*: Reduce delay and congestion on Route 111 at Precourt (details below). Additional circulation in the Biddeford Crossing area. Possibly opens new development opportunities (depending on access controls and zoning).
  + Partial Connection:
    - Daily traffic: Traffic on Route 111 reduced by about 14 percent (Biddeford Crossing to Precourt St/Exit 32).
    - AM Peak: Minor improvement in delay for traffic exiting the Turnpike during the AM Peak, but other traffic movements not improved.
    - PM Peak: Reduces delay at the Rte. 111/Precourt intersection by 12 percent during the PM Peak. All intersection movements improved to LOS D or better (three LOS E movements for the baseline), and intersection to LOS C (from LOS D baseline).

Brad: Obviously there is a new tollbooth involved.

Sara Devlin: On the second one, yes. We are not sure where at this time, but it would be similar to the Jetport, Skyway Drive interchange. There would be two tollbooths.

Carol: The second option is much longer term than the first one and they could be phased one after the other. Again this is the only place in the whole study area that currently has a major congestion issue.

Brad: How does the city feel about this?

Carol: From my conversation with John Bubier, the city does not see the benefit to them in this. However, John is not here to get a full understanding of the proposal, so we do not know for sure.

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for the Route 109 interchange***

**Add second left turn lane from Exit 19 to southbound Route 109 (Wells)**

Add a second left turn lane from Maine Turnpike exit 19 to Route 109 and extend the existing two-lane receiving segment beyond the I-95 Bridge.

* Benefits: Reduced congestion and queuing on the exit ramp. LOS improved from LOS D to LOS C. Eliminates projected LOS E and LOS F movements. Allows some green time to be reallocated to the left turn from Route 109 to the Exit 19 tollbooth.
* Cost: Approximately $1 million.
* Natural and physical resources potentially impacted: None.
* Implementation timeframe: Near-term.

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for the Route 202, Route 109 Intersection.***

**Reconstruct Route 202/Route 109 intersection in downtown Sanford**

Widen and realign US Route 202 to improve intersection alignment and add an eastbound left turn pocket. Also add a narrow center island on the south leg of Route 109 to enforce right-in/right/out turns at Twombley Road. Provide well-marked, safe pedestrian crossings through the intersection.

* Benefits: Reduced congestion and LOS improved from LOS D to LOS C. Two AM peak and three PM peak LOS E movements improved to LOS D or better. Reduced potential for crashes on US Route 202 due to separation of left turning traffic. Reduced incidence of collisions on Route 109 near Twombley Road (current high crash location).
* Costs: Approximately $1.1 million
* Natural and physical resources potentially impacted: Would require acquisition of right of way to the south of Route 202 (currently a vacant restaurant and parking) and elimination of on street parking in front of the church at the northwest corner of the intersection.
* Implementation timeframe: Near- to Mid-term. This is a moderate priority improvement. Property should be acquired while undeveloped/unused.

Charlie: Across the intersection where the plantings are, the land is owned by DOT with an easement to the 7/11 to have their driveway there. The church there is closed down and up for sale. The Unitarian church on the corner is still functions but may be willing to sell. It does have historical significance however.

Steve: It would hard to make the case that we need to take that property anyway, and we wouldn’t want to

Brad: This area may be part of our traffic-calming plan to narrow Main Street.

***Steve presented the following conceptual strategies for Route 109 Corridor (Sanford-Wells)***

**Plan for ultimate Cross Sections of Route 109 in Sanford**

Two/Three lanes between Downtown Sanford and Old Mill Road

North of Old Mill Road, existing development essentially constrains the highway to a 2-lane cross section, with turn lanes provided at some intersections. Sufficient space exists to add additional turn lanes as needed; either at intersections or major driveway entrances. Where left turn lanes are not needed, raised medians could be established at crosswalk locations to provide pedestrians with safe refuge when crossing the highway. Candidate locations include Route 109 intersections with Park St/Jackson St, Avon St/Berwick Rd, Schuler St, or other intersection locations where new crosswalks are merited.

Five lanes between Old Mill Road and Route 4

Old Mill Road and Westview Drive: Two northbound and one southbound lane are provided from approximately Old Mill Road to Westview Drive, in addition to a left turn lane.

Ultimately, a second southbound lane could be constructed to create a continuous 5-lane section between Old Mill Road and Route 4. The existing traffic signal at Marden’s may be relocated to the Old Mill Road intersection, and the performance of this intersection over time would determine the need for an additional southbound lane. Should congestion in the future here warrant a second southbound lane at the Old Mill intersection, it should be continue to Westview Drive.

Westview Drive and Route 4: The existing cross section between Westview Drive and Route 4 is four lanes, with left turn lanes provided north of the Sanford Center for Shopping. Right-of-way should be preserved to accommodate a left turn lane (5-lane cross section) between the Center for Shopping and Route 4 as well, which could be constructed when needed as adjacent parcels develop.

There was some discussion about a large potential development that would have its primary entrance at already existing intersection of Route 109 and Old Mill road and how this would complement the recommendation to move the Marden’s traffic signal to that intersection. Concerns were raised about the widening of Route 109 between Old Mill Road and Route 4 could worsen the existing problem with pedestrian/automobile accidents in the area.

Carol: The public meeting is in Sanford on the 20th of August at 6 pm. Thank you all for coming.

The meeting ended at 5:10 pm.