



SUMMARY OF MEETING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Date: September 24, 2002

Project: **I-95 Branford to Rhode Island Feasibility Study**
Connecticut Department of Transportation

State Project No.: 170-2295
CHA Project No.: 11530

Location of Meeting: Westbrook

Date of Meeting: September 17, 2002 3:00 p.m.

Subject of Meeting: Local Outreach Meeting #15

Project Overview by Jim Andrini of ConnDOT and Rod Bascom of CHA:

- 85 key intersections
- transit opportunities including Shoreline East
- identify deficiencies in Corridor
- I-95 planned and built in the 50's and 60's and is not designed to handle current demand
- Will look at geometry to be assessed against current standards, operational, short, mid, long – term improvement recommendations
- High profile, high priority with Transportation Strategy Board.
- Public participation is an important part of the Study. The Study will include Public Outreach on 3 levels:
 - 1) A Study Advisory Committee established specifically for this project and consisting of local, regional and state stakeholders, including COG/RPA and town representatives and special interest groups (The first of 6 meetings will be on November 7th, 2002).
 - 2) Local Outreach: Meetings with local towns (40 meetings).
 - 3) Public Informational Meetings (6 meetings) – will be advertised – public invited.
- In addition, we will establish a 1-800 phone line, web page and Email address where people may learn more about the project and provide comments. The Email will be answered by Jim Andrini; all questions or comments will be answered.

The outreach sessions will allow the Study team to learn about the specific conditions, issues and concerns locally and to better understand future traffic demand since we are requesting that Towns provide information relative to growth and land use (e.g. Plans of Development, major proposed developments, etc).

Questions and Comments *(with ConnDOT or CHA's response in italics)*

1. Would closing interchanges be an option to facilitate traffic? *Yes. Some movements could be changed. Westbrook does seem much more spread out; exits are not on top of each other.*
2. Where is the traffic going, is there an assumption or a study behind it? *Traffic counts were completed. An origin/destination study, which would provide this information was not carried out as part of this study.*
3. Were there any counts of just Westbrook? *All interchanges, ramps and well traveled intersections were counted, the names of those which apply to Westbrook (5) were read aloud.*
4. Construction of the long term recommendations would not begin before 2010? *Some parts may be built before then as a start. We are making a very conservative estimate. This is a 2-year study – in the best case scenario, design will occur in next year. If environmental permitting and public outreach aspects of the project run smoothly, the project as a whole will move much more quickly. Environmental processing is unknown. Maybe 7-8 years.*
5. Is Federal money being used? *This road began merely as a state road, so insignificant that politicians wanted exits to their homes. It was designed as a local road, not an interstate. This study is totally state funded.*
6. Can 4-lanes be built? *3 lanes is all that is feasible due to resources, environmental constraints, etc. Multi-modal alternatives are being considered as most effective.*
7. The train station here should be improved.
8. DOT current projects were reviewed.

Westbrook-specific issues identified:

9. Westbrook stores. Mall road is an area of concern. Westbrook locally put cap on properties. It is perceived to be working fairly well. There is a rumor that some lots near the mall are being sold. A mall site plan and the study conducted will be available for view. Westbrook utilizes GIS, and is very accurate.
10. *Any construction plans which may affect traffic?* Westbrook has been conceptualizing about the construction of a skating rink. It is only in the discussion stage. What is the standard in which something is deemed to affect traffic?
11. *Typically 100,000 sq. feet is the standard for analysis and review by the Department's State Traffic Commission. That is not to say that anything smaller will have no effect, it is just the standard.*
12. Westbrook is also discussing opening an Industrial plant near Pequot Park. It may affect Exit 64. It would not spill over onto next interchange.

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13. Marina/Water's Edge resort on Route 1 may be expanded.
14. Town Center reconfiguration (town green on Route 1) is proposed.
15. On route 153 there is the possibility of a nature preserve...1,200 acre development. 300 houses and golf course planned instead, the Nature Preserve idea was not fruitful. ConnDOT has a report on this information.
16. *Traffic problems?* Town Center has lots of accidents. There is a big downhill off ramp, biggest hot spot – off exit 64-65.

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