

**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAY DESIGN
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT UNIT**

PROPOSED PROJECT PP-158-009
INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS - ROUTE 57 AT ROUTE 136
TOWN OF WESTPORT

REPORT OF MEETING

PROPOSED PROJECT NUMBER: PP-158-009
 PROPOSED PROJECT NAME: Intersection Improvements – Route 57 at Route 136
 TOWN/CITY: Town of Westport
 LOCATION OF MEETING: Microsoft Teams and YouTube Live Stream
 DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 7pm
 SUBJECT OF MEETING: Virtual Public Information Meeting, Live Presentation with Q&A session

IN ATTENDANCE

Marissa Pfaffinger	CTDOT	Marissa.Pfaffinger@ct.gov
Shraddha Joshi	CTDOT	Shraddha.Joshi@ct.gov
Matthew Geanacopoulos	CTDOT	Matthew.Geanacopoulos@ct.gov
Jennifer Usher	BL Companies	jusher@blcompanies.com
Quinn Duffy	BL Companies	qduffy@blcompanies.com
Jessica Fasi	BL Companies	jfasi@blcompanies.com
Daniel Pinto	BL Companies	dpinto@blcompanies.com
23 MS Teams attendees		
6 YouTube attendees		

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING FORMAT

The meeting was held to solicit comments and feedback regarding the conceptual design developed by the Project Development Unit to address peak hour congestion and congestion related-crashes at the flashing beacon intersection of Route 57 and Route 136. The existing traffic signals at the intersections of Route 57 at Merritt Parkway northbound ramps and Route 57 at Merritt Parkway southbound ramps, which are beyond their expected service life are proposed to be replaced as well as a part of this project.

In attendance from the Municipality were First Selectwoman Jennifer Tooker, Peter Ratkiewich (Director of Public Works), and Keith Wilberg (Town Engineer). In attendance from the Western Connecticut Council of Governments was Kristin Hadjstylianos (Principal Planner).

A separate meeting for impacted property owners was held in May 2022 via MS Teams. The owners from 6 properties participated and were provided an opportunity to review the proposal and ask questions in a smaller setting. The Town of Westport and WestCOG participated in that meeting as well. Multiple property owners who attended the earlier meeting also attended this VPIM.



Marissa Pfaffinger and Shraddha Joshi represented the Department as the ‘project team’ from the Project Development Unit. Matthew Geanacopoulos from the Division of Rights of Way provided support related to rights of way processes, along with help from BL Companies employees assisting as the emcee and comment/question chat moderators. The presentation was approximately 30 minutes long, which included an overview of the project development process by Marissa Pfaffinger, and 25 minutes of project specific information by Shraddha Joshi, including an in-depth review of the existing conditions data, various alternatives explored, the preferred alternative, and anticipated property and other impacts. Mathew Geanacopoulos explained the rights of way processes involved with property acquisition and other private property impacts. Approximately 60 minutes comment, question and feedback session followed the formal presentation.

Approximately 23 viewers participated in the MS Teams Live Event, including State Senator Will Haskell, with another 6 viewers watching on You-Tube. The project team received approximately 50 questions/comments via MS Team chat, email, and voicemail with participants speaking about concerns of the large size of the proposed signalized intersection, vehicle speeds in the area, and driveway access concerns. There were questions and comments regarding the consideration of a roundabout at this location, access and impacts to Wassell Lane, traffic signal operation and equipment, proposed lane configuration, compensation for impact on private properties, traffic volume distribution post-pandemic, a new Exit on Merritt Parkway, adding crosswalks at both ends of Daybreak Lane etc. There were 3 comments directly opposing the proposed improvements due to the large size of the intersection and 4 comments thanking the team for the work, and rest were questions on the topics noted above.

A link to the YouTube recording of the meeting is available on the CTDOT VPIM Library shown at the link below. The comment period extends through Friday, June 24th.

Project Webpage: https://portal.ct.gov/DOTWestportPP-158-009
MS Teams Recording: https://portal.ct.gov/dot/general/CTDOT-VPIM-Library
Project Email: DOTProjectPP-158-009@ct.gov
Phone: (860)944-1111
Survey: https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/8f49e1ad5d3946d083f71825ee49f67f

QUESTION/COMMENTS AND ANSWER SESSION

The questions and comments submitted by the public and stakeholders and the responses provided by the design team during the meeting are as follows:

EMAIL: Will the traffic signals at this location be synchronized with the two signals at the entrances to the Merritt Pkwy?

- Yes, the traffic signals at the end of the Merritt Parkway ramp terminals will be replaced since they are at the end of their service life and they will be coordinated with the new proposed signal to provide the most efficient traffic operation.

EMAIL: Is it possible to have a signal at this location with the appropriate traffic trip function that doesn't involve huge industrial stanchions?



- The project team interpreted “industrial stanchions” as mast arms and responded that the type of signal support (mast arm versus span wire) will be determined during the design phase. The design team will present the proposed signal support at the public information meeting at the end of preliminary design phase.

EMAIL: What will happen to the area where the old roadway is to be removed? Will it just be an open space? And who will maintain it?

- Existing pavement will be removed and grassed. It will remain State right of way and DOT Maintenance forces will maintain it.

EMAIL: Is a roundabout being considered for this intersection?

- As mentioned during the formal presentation, a roundabout was evaluated for this location. The volumes are too high for a single lane roundabout, a “2 by 2” roundabout (two entering lanes for each approach, and two circulating lanes) would be required. Nation-wide evidence has suggested that roundabouts with this layout can be more challenging for drivers as they create more decision points for proper lane selection and yielding. Because of the large footprint required for the multilane roundabout, the impacts are greater to the properties adjacent to the intersection as compared to the proposed signalized intersection. Additionally, because of the efficiency of the roundabout, the traffic signal at the Merritt Parkway northbound ramp terminal will not be able to process the through volumes and, during the red phase for the Route 57 westbound traffic, the queue from the signal will back up into the roundabout, potentially creating a grid lock on the roundabout. Therefore, the roundabout was a less suitable solution for this location.

LIVE CHAT: The homes on Wassell Lane enclosed in the purple boxes. In what way are these homes affected?

- The purple lines on Wassell Lane indicate property lines. There will be no property acquired from any property on Wassell Lane. The only change to Wassell Lane properties is that with the proposed improvements, there will be a new access point. Wassell Lane will enter as a signalized intersection to Main Street, green light for Wassell Lane will come up when there is a vehicle waiting on Wassell Lane.

LIVE CHAT: Have you looked into the sight distance concerns for the property of 18 Weston Rd that were brought up at the last meeting?

- That is an action item on the project team’s list after these public engagement activities are concluded. The property owner will be contacted via email regarding this.

LIVE CHAT: A neighbor noticed some traffic counts being conducted at this intersection this week. Do you know if that was related to this project? Were the traffic counts used for this study collected during COVID?

- The traffic count was not conducted as a part of this proposed project and the design team is not aware of the counts. The traffic counts for this study were collected in November of 2019, before the pandemic began.

LIVE CHAT: What disruptions should the residents of Wassell lane expect?

- The design team assumed that the disruptions referred to the disruptions caused during construction and answered accordingly. The staging and sequencing for construction activities have not been determined at this time. It will be decided by the design team during construction and presented to the public at the end of preliminary design.



LIVE CHAT: Will we get a copy of the PP for reference to the traffic diagrams?

- A recording of the entire presentation along with the question and answer session will be posted on the DOT project website in coming days.

LIVE CHAT: Why not consider a roundabout solution. Carmel IN has been successful with complex intersection.

- As discussed earlier, roundabout solution was considered for this location as a part of alternative analysis. The Department is aware that roundabouts in some communities in other states like Carmel, IN and Bend, OR have been successful. Additional information on Department's use of roundabout is available; Google search with terms "CTDOT Roundabout" will bring up CTDOT's roundabout information page with information on roundabouts in general and crash reduction data in Connecticut. Given the footprint of the roundabout required at this location and potential confusion that comes with the multilane roundabout, it was not a great solution for this location.

LIVE CHAT: My understanding is that the project is being undertaken due to safety concerns. If there are so few accidents and only 5 minor injury accidents out of 40000000 vehicles passing thru. Why is this project being considered from a safety point of view? Would it be accurate to say that less than 0.00005% of vehicles are involved in an accident and 0% in a serious accident?

- This project is proposed primarily for congestion relief. Part of the analysis when looking at an intersection or corridor is to look at what else might be going on. While the primary purpose of this project is to reduce congestion in the area, the crash patterns in the area are indicative of rear end crashes that are often related to congestion. So, the primary purpose of the project will not be considered crash reduction. However, if we are able to address the congestion, we would expect to see a reduction of that type of rear end crash. The primary purpose of this project is not safety but congestion relief.

LIVE CHAT: This is not a question - just wanted to say thank you! This intersection has been awful for years, your work is much appreciated.

- Moderator acknowledged the project team's appreciation for the feedback.

LIVE CHAT: Isn't the traffic on Wilton Rd & Post Rd, and Riverside traffic worse than this intersection?

- The project team requested the question to be sent as an email so that it could be followed up with specific information related to those intersections. It is important to note that while some intersections might have worse congestion than others, there might be different reasons while trying to implement some standalone projects would be less feasible or potentially more expensive or impactful while comparing one location to another. There are other studies being conducted on Post Road (Route 1) throughout Fairfield County in general. That corridor carries a lot of traffic, and the challenges tend to be very different for that type of location versus something like this location. This particular location was being looked at, at the request of WestCOG.

LIVE CHAT: I would like to know more on how Wassell Lane will be impacted on each proposal alternatives.

- For most of the alternatives presented including the preferred alternate, there are no actual impacts to properties on Wassell Lane. For the property on "1 Wassell Lane", the proposal involves wrapping the outlet point around that parcel. No impacts to properties or parcels on Wassell Lane itself. Wassell Lane will be controlled by a traffic signal, vehicles will have to come and wait at the end of Wassell Lane for the light to turn green.



LIVE CHAT: You already noted that speeding is already an issue in this intersection. How will installing a traffic light that will enable even more excessive speeding make this intersection any safer? How will you address the fact that people will speed even more to get through a changing light?

- We heard about this concern at the property owner’s meeting as well. The traffic data collected around the State shows that usually the average speed limit is higher than the posted speed limit by about 5 mph and the 85th percentile speeds are about 10 miles per hour higher than the speed limit. Speed data was collected at this location; average speed was 3 to 8 mph higher than the speed limit and the 85th percentile speed was 8 to 13 mph higher than the speed limit. The speed ranges are already in that ballpark range of what we see around the State. There are already traffic signals in this area including one on Main Street at Clinton Avenue about 1500’ south of the subject intersection. So, we are not anticipating dramatic increase in speed because of the proposed signal. We are anticipating the speeds to remain in the similar range of what we see now.

LIVE CHAT: Has the introduction of an Exit 43 off the Merritt been considered to reduce the volume of traffic in the area? If the additional entrance/exit were adopted, would the projected efficiency grade of “C” in 2025 be increased to an “A”?

- The redistribution of traffic if new Exit 43 was introduced in the Merritt Parkway was not a part of this analysis. That would be a pretty significant undertaking in terms of traffic modeling, but it would likely alleviate some of the traffic. We can think more about it later on, but it is unlikely that it would go to level of service “A”, especially as traffic volumes re-settle out. It would take complete traffic redistribution of the area with an understanding of origin-destination of every car utilizing the existing exit and some understanding of how some of these vehicles might utilize the new Exit 43 instead. That type of major distribution was not considered for this particular location.

LIVE CHAT: How does your Traffic Operation analysis take into account GPS applications rerouting non local traffic through this intersection as an alternate route?

- Rerouting is very difficult to capture. For instance, if the Merritt is backed up or if I-95 is backed up, how the traffic is rerouted. When collecting traffic volumes, what is done is we try to make sure that there was no major incident on that particular day that would skew the data one way or other. We also try to validate those data with traffic operations with something as simple as Google to try to understand if the analysis we performed and the result we are seeing in the potential queues that are building up are consistent with that typical type of traffic. It’s hard to take into account a single day type of diversion but we do try to collect traffic counts and use information for what would be considered a normal day.

LIVE CHAT: Your data shows very few cars turning right or left from Weston Rd heading north toward the Merritt. How do you justify adding two more lanes to this road?

- In the afternoon peak hour, the Weston Road approach and the Main Street approach form what is called a critical lane group. These 2 movements are competing for the same time during the afternoon peak. So, it was either provide 2 thru lanes on Weston Road or provide double left turn lane on Main Street. What that double left turn lane does is, we would have to shade out the area in front of the extra left turn and shift the thru lane which would create more impact and sort of wasted space area on the Easton Road approach. One of our objectives was to limit the impact to private properties, we were mindful of private properties in the area. That’s why even though the volumes on Weston Road are not that high, 2 lane approach was provided to accommodate the traffic during the afternoon peak hour.



LIVE CHAT: At the last meeting I raised several concerns. Have you looked into the safety hazards created by your proposed plan for the driveway of 18 Weston Rd?

- We have not had an opportunity to follow up with some of the concerns that we heard at the property owners' meeting but that does remain an action item for us following this meeting. As we look into the sightline and some of the concerns for your property, we plan to follow up with you via email.

LIVE CHAT: It is clear that the majority of the traffic is not sourced from or traveling to Easton and Weston roads. Can you review how disrupting all 4 roads rather than creating a more direct route from the Merritt off-ramp and Main Street was a better decision than the current proposal?

- For the alternative that we reviewed that made the Route 57, Weston Road to Main Street approach the primary movement, the reason that alternative was not successful was that the turning volume from Route 57 to Route 136 (Easton Road) combined with all other volumes, the traffic signal operation did not provide enough relief for those movements. Even though the operation for the Route 57 movement where the bypass currently is, is more efficient, there was not enough room between the proposed intersection and the Merritt Parkway northbound ramp, and the queues would backup into that intersection. It also comes back to directionality of the traffic; if the traffic was flowing in one particular direction like in the morning, it is possible that particular alternative would have been more successful. However, because there is traffic flowing north to south in one peak and south to north in the other, the queues that were backing up into the adjacent intersection and queue lengths were considerable.

LIVE CHAT: I noticed individuals collecting traffic data at the intersection recently. Will you share this data?

- Moderator acknowledged the question and referred back to the answer to similar question asked previously stating that the project team was not aware of that particular count, but the project team would look into that, and that count does not pertain to this project.

LIVE CHAT: Can you share the anticipated queue lengths in the 2045 build condition for each approach? Will the proposed improvements alleviate the existing queuing?

- The queue lengths were not readily available during the presentation, the project team asked the commentator to provide the contact information via email for the queue lengths for various approaches to be provided via email.

LIVE CHAT: I appreciated the information and all was delivered with great efficiency and more detailed information as this project moves forward is greatly appreciated.

- Moderator acknowledged the project team's appreciation for the feedback.

LIVE CHAT: Have any pollution studies been performed or will be performed if as currently proposed will result in a significant increasing the number of lanes and stopped cars?

- Air quality review is a part of project design process. Change of the number of lanes and change of traffic control in this particular area would be modeled as a part of an air quality conformity review required by the Federal government as a part of process that every project that meets certain criteria need to go under. For the introduction of traffic signal, the specific threshold is when the level of service falls below "C", there are certain requirements to that. While we cannot say what the specifics of the air quality/pollution study will demonstrate at this time, it is a part of the design process and is part of being compliant with the Federal regulations.



LIVE CHAT: Are you getting rid of the intersection by- pass?

- Yes, as you saw in the proposed preferred alternative layout, we are getting rid of the bypass connector leg. The asphalt will be removed and that area will be grassed.

LIVE CHAT: The design needs to include Merritt exits as it impacts the intersection.

- The traffic operation of the 2 Merritt Parkway ramps is part of the analysis and is considered. No geometric changes to the ramps are proposed as a part of this project; that would require more analysis, more geometric impact, more property impact which are outside the purpose and need to address the congestion at the intersection. The traffic analysis was however, carried through to model both those intersections as well.

LIVE CHAT: Why include a special solution for Wassell Ln. A dedicated signal seems overkill. This is a massive increase in # of lanes. Are we convinced it will increase thru put?

- There is a very high right turn movement from the Merritt Parkway ramp towards Main Street in the morning peak hour. That heavy right turn does not slow down even in the afternoon peak hour. Also, in the afternoon peak hour, there is also very heavy left turn from Main Street towards the Merritt Parkway ramps. With Wassell Lane coming in so close to the intersection, our analysis showed that the traffic waiting on Wassell Lane will have a very tough time getting out, especially turning left. There are considerable number of homes at the end of the Wassell Lane, hence special consideration was given there.

LIVE CHAT: How does reducing roadway reduce congestion?

- With the existing condition with the stop control, the traffic analysis showed that the intersection is what is considered over capacity. The ability to need to allow only one or two cars to move through the intersection at the same time is not the most efficient way to process traffic. In addition, what we have at this location is we have additional stop signs at the northern and southern ends of this intersection that are required because of the bypass lane. Because of the bypass lane, which does accommodate high volume of traffic that moves in that particular direction, it causes the cars that are not using that leg to not only stop at the intersection, but to stop again. The actual volumes that move through the stop control that contributes to the queues in the area as well as the additional stop control add additional delay. It was noted too from number of people we heard from about the confusion that can be caused by the irregular shape which also contributes to that congestion build up. What a traffic signal does is, it assigns the right of way, when it's your turn to go and the traffic signal is timed to accommodate to move as many vehicles as possible through that particular phase. Part of the reason why a traffic signal is useful in alleviating a stop control is that it can better distribute the amount of time depending on where the need is. Essentially, with an all-way stop control it is up to each person to move through and to decide the rights of way for themselves versus a traffic signal where the green ball is indicating that it's a go which generally tends to improve efficiency.

LIVE CHAT: This seems to be extreme. Why not start with the traffic lights? Have you considered prohibiting left turns onto Main Street heading north on Weston Road?

- The installation of a traffic signal with minimal other changes was one of the first alternatives we looked at, as to how to signalize the intersection as simply as possible without adding any lanes or change in the configuration. What we saw was that without adding the number of lanes, the queues that would build



up when traffic signal is introduced. When you incorporate the volume what is now in the bypass lane into the operation, that's when the traffic queue starts to build up and additional lanes become necessary. Prohibition of left turn from Main Street to Weston Road was not considered because that is a heavier volume.

LIVE CHAT: Your slide notes that 250K is allocated for resident compensation. The gentleman said that the state is fair with compensation. There are many trees that will be destroyed by this project, trees are extremely expensive. How will this be compensated? Will the DOT pay to have the trees replaced?

- The 250K noted on the slide is based on conceptual cost estimate, not a lot of in-depth research was done to develop that number. It is something we use as a placeholder so that we have an idea of what kind of money we would be talking about. As we move further along in design, we can identify the trees on the private properties that might be impacted by the project which is developed when we develop compensation. Usually, replacement costs are not paid for the trees because it is not practical to replace a 100' or 50' tree. The appraisers generally assign what is called the "contributory value" and they look at what is the value that these trees add to the property. Each appraiser uses their judgement to determine what is fair for the fair market value for those trees. If what is being offered for the trees is not adequate, there will be an opportunity to negotiate and present data that helps demonstrate that what is being offered is not sufficient.

LIVE CHAT from Senator Will Haskell: For those who might oppose any changes to this intersection, can you further discuss the impact of doing nothing? The no-build scenario would lead to an "F" level of service, if I understood correctly?

- The project team began the response by thanking Senator Haskell for joining. In existing conditions, the level of service is "E" in the morning peak hour and "F" in the afternoon peak hour and as traffic builds up over time with projections, traffic operations will degrade to level of service "F" during both the morning and afternoon peak hour. One important thing to note about level of service "F" is that there is nothing below that level of service. So, we could have something that is just barely at level of service "F" at 60 seconds delay, or we could have 100 seconds of delay that would also be considered a level of service "F". This is one of the limitations of level of service from "A" to "F". As we look into the future, the severity of the delay could be much more considerable and it will use the same clarification. Those delay numbers were part of our configuration as well. With the existing configuration the level of service for 2019 volumes is "E" in the morning peak hour and "F" in the afternoon peak hour and as traffic builds up over time with projections, the traffic operations will degrade to level of service "F".

LIVE CHAT: This proposal results in a new version of Post Road. I am not supportive of this extreme proposal because it actually results in increased traffic, increased pollution, increase in noise. This is a suburban area and thus proposal turns it into Post Road part two.

- The purpose of the meeting tonight is to present proposed solution for the existing condition that is out there today. Part of the reason we are engaging in this public feedback is to understand whether or not if the public is in support of these impacts and how this would be received. Part of the reason we are doing this before a project is initiated is to understand and provide an opportunity to hear the public and to be able to share these feelings with us. All the questions and comments coming in tonight will be a record for this project.

LIVE CHAT: How will the speed limits change around this intersection?



- Changing the speed limit is not something we would undertake as a part of this project. There are processes in place for a Town to be able to request a speed limit change on local roads and a State road. That process is through the Office of State Traffic Administration. As a part of this project, at this point there would be no anticipation of changing the speed limit out there. However, if that was something that is desired over time, those mechanisms and those processes exist to inform that decision with a study before any change would be made.

LIVE CHAT: Can we add crosswalks on both ends of Daybreak Lane in order to safely cross?

- Crosswalks are currently proposed at the signalized intersection and we are also proposing to either replace or install sidewalks that lead up to the intersection and surrounding it. Some of the sidewalks out there are bituminous that blend in with the pavement, we are proposing to replace the sidewalks that lead up to the intersection and cross at the intersection with the help of the signal. As far as the additional crosswalks not at the intersection, we would consider that to be a mid-block crosswalk. Midblock crosswalks were not considered as part of the proposal, sometimes there are concerns with the midblock crosswalks if the line of sight is not direct to them. That would be a follow up item, if this resident is comfortable reaching out to us via email, we can provide some additional information after the meeting.

LIVE CHAT: I echo the comment thanking you all!

- Moderator acknowledged the project team’s appreciation for the feedback.

LIVE CHAT: Thank you.

- Moderator acknowledged the project team’s appreciation for the feedback.

LIVE CHAT: Would you anticipate that adaptive signal controllers would be utilized at these intersections?

- We do not have answer at this point; there are number of different ways we can make sure that traffic signals in close proximity to each other are communicating. The project team is not sure how far DOT has gotten into implementing the adaptive traffic signal controls. There is a pilot project that’s going on in the Berlin Turnpike in Newington and Berlin which is the first one in State to truly implement adaptive signal control. As that pilot is constructed and gets underway, Division of Traffic Engineering and Highway Operations Unit will be collecting data and if it will be a successful implementation, we will be looking to implement that other locations as well. Adaptive signal control is certainly being looked at around other parts of the State and at this location if it meets the criteria outlined by best practices, it could be considered during design.

LIVE CHAT: Have the presenters spent time at the intersection in all hours of the day?

- While the presenters have not spent time at the intersection at all hours of the day, field review was conducted to see what the traffic operations are like at the intersection. Google maps was our alternative to compare the data and we did talk to the Town officials on what the congestion levels are and what the daily operations look like. While not directly for this project, the project team have driven through this location at various times of the day and have tried to avoid it during the PM peak hour. Also, as a part of this public involvement we are hoping to talk to people who have this first hand knowledge which is a big part of why we are reaching out. If your experience with the intersection does not align with some of the things that we have been talking about, that’s an excellent feedback for you to share either tonight or in a follow-up via phone or email as a part of our public involvement.



LIVE CHAT: Do your traffic projections take into account Work from Home since the data is pre Covid?

- The changing traffic patterns have not been completely captured in this but one of the things we have done is look at how those patterns have shifted. For most of what we have seen across the State, not particular to this intersection though is that most volumes have started returning to the pre Covid levels. What has changed is the distribution of the traffic, like while the peak hour used to be from 7 to 8, it might not be as bad from 7 to 8 but it might be similar from 6:45 to 8:30. So, the actual span might be longer, but the actual densest time is not as dense anymore. No, these particular projections do not take into account work from home, but should the project move forward, revisiting the traffic volumes would be key step for the design team to make sure that nothing had dramatically changed since the time we had conducted the analysis.

LIVE CHAT: A 16 lane, C level intersection seems excessive for the area and doesn't sound to be efficient enough to justify the project. What stops you from bringing the score higher and how do you intend on ensuring this large of a project fits within the environment that is this area of Westport?

- Like mentioned during the presentation, our target level of service is usually “D” or lower. The number of lanes and level of service are not directly proportional to each other, so if we were to take out one lane, instead of going to level of service “D”, it would actually go to an “E” or “F”. We looked at various different lane combinations, in fact what we showed earlier today was only a subset of what we looked at. For the preferred alternative we ended up with the level of service “C”. Additionally, the growth factor for this area is very low because it is a mature area, that’s why even if we have level of “C” right now that is going to be “C” for 2045 as well. What that indicates is that the intersection is not overbuilt for the 2045 traffic volumes. Because the growth factor is low, it is appropriate/right sized for today and for future as well

LIVE CHAT: Fast highway access is directly related to crime. Has any though been given to this aspect of safety?

- The direct correlation between access to highway and crime is not a factor that was considered here. We will certainly make a note of this question and will look into the direct statistic of that and make it a part of our project record.

LIVE CHAT: This proposal seems far too large for this intersection. It will basically turn this residential area into an area more like the Post Road. I am opposed to this design in its current form, much too excessive.

- The moderator acknowledged and thanked the resident for the comment.

LIVE CHAT: How has the proposal considered the “town welcome” element. This is a key entryway to the town.

- As far as the gateway element/welcome to the town element, that is not something that has been directly considered at this point. The location does represent an entry to the Town. If there was any desire to explore any particular signing, that is something that can be incorporated into the project. But the specific details of that are not known at this time.

LIVE CHAT: Morning back up on Easton Rd. can easily extend half a mile. Will this be improved?

- In the morning peak hour, even though the intersection level of service is “E”, the Easton Road approach has level of service “F”. The Google maps typical traffic operation image was presented to show how the queue backs up to the Merritt Parkway overpass in the morning. With the proposed improvements, the queue will not be that far along.



LIVE CHAT: I'm opposed to this massive proposal. It's only increasing the number of cars and traffic, not reducing it. There is still going to be massive congestion no matter what. The town is increasing dense affordable housing. This does not take into account an increase in cars. This proposal does not solve anything. Add another exit off the Merritt instead.

- The moderator acknowledged and thanked the resident for the comment.

LIVE CHAT: While I appreciate your efforts to reduce the congestion at this intersection, in my opinion you are only creating an even larger scale of congestion as a result. I think that all these added lanes of traffic create a city environment which is ill-suited to the small suburban town that I moved to. This large-scale project with all the multiple lanes seems out of touch with the area.

- The moderator acknowledged and thanked the resident for the comment.

LIVE CHAT from Jen Tooker - First Selectwoman:

I'd like to thank the DOT and this particular team for their work on this intersection. Speaking on behalf of the Town, we are committed to working together to ensure we have a safe and efficient intersection for our residents and our visitors.

- The project team thanked the First Selectwoman for acknowledging the work put in so far. We will continue to follow up with the Town after this meeting and share the results of the comments that we heard tonight and any additional feedback we have received from the phone or website.

