

MEETING NOTES

By: Jennifer Williams
Date: May 10, 2006
Subject: North Main Street, Brewer, Corridor Study (GP JN 1227)
Public Meeting
Attendance: Gary Briggs, Frank Higgins, Linda Johns, David Cote, Richard Gray, David Grant, Allen Campbell, Howard Gover, Craig Bailey, Joel Dearborn, Al Elkin, Noreen Elkin, Rob Kenerson, Tom Gorrill, Jennifer Williams
Distribution: Gary Briggs, Frank Higgins, Linda Johns, David Cote, Richard Gray, Joel Dearborn, Rob Kenerson, Jerry Freeman, Gail Kelly

The purpose of this meeting was to present the draft final report to the public and obtain comment. The meeting began with Rob Kenerson welcoming everyone for coming and briefly explaining the process that had been undertaken and the next steps. Gary Briggs then introduced the members of the Advisory Committee and gave a presentation outlining the alternatives that had been considered, and the recommendations of the committee. The meeting was then opened for public questions and comments.

Questions or comments received and responses given at the meeting are as follows:

- Do the future traffic volumes take into account the extension of I-395? *No, the committee agreed that the extension of I-395 would not be completed within the ten-year time frame for this study.*
- Is North Main Street wide enough for the additional travel lane with the elimination of on-street parking? *Yes it is.*
- The businesses along North Main Street closest to Wilson Street will be the hardest hit by the elimination of on-street parking. *The City should consider acquiring some parcels along the corridor, specifically closer to Wilson Street, to create additional off-street parking. The waterfront master plan does call for the construction of a parking garage on the corner of Betton Street and Penobscot Street. The availability of off-street parking will need to be given thorough consideration before eliminating the on-street parking.*
- How will the proposed new alignment of Betton Street impact this planned parking garage? *Right now, both the Betton Street alignment and the parking garage are conceptual. The details will be considered and worked out in the design process of each project.*
- How are left-turns prevented at a right-in/right-out only intersection? *The intersection is designed with a "pork chop" island in the center of the leg that is only for right turns. This forces the traffic to only be able to make the right turn movements.*
- What will the route be for northbound traffic heading for the new bridge? *Traffic will turn left on Betton Street, right on Penobscot Street, then left on State Street to the new bridge.*
- The plan has the realignment of Betton Street to Parker Street scheduled for 2010 or beyond. Wouldn't it make more sense to do that and the signal relocation sooner rather than later? *Yes, however, given the competition for available funding it will likely be at least 2010 before the funds could be available for design and construction. There is still some property acquisition that will be required before the actual road relocation. The City is moving forward on that portion of the process now. The intent of these recommendations is that the City can begin*

working on some of the lower cost improvements as current budgets and funding allows, while planning for the 'bigger ticket' items in upcoming budget cycles.

- *Is there any possibility of aligning the driveway for Parker Bailey with the existing signal? It is a tough intersection with the railroad crossing at an angle along there as well. That should be further evaluated. Currently, the driveway for Parker Bailey is located at the intersection, but is not signalized. Signal heads should be considered for the driveway as well.*
- *When does the City plan to acquire the properties needed for the realignment of Betton Street as well as the construction of the parking garage? As a business owner on Betton Street, should I be looking to move my business soon? The City is not likely to be looking to acquire your property in the very near future. However, it would probably be good to start talking with City staff to stay aware of on-going plans and opportunities. The City is not looking to put anyone out of business.*
- *Part of the presentation included a pedestrian mall and dining/shopping area for the westerly leg of Center Street. Does an appliance store fit into that picture? Yes and no. As discussed previously, the City is not looking to put anybody out of business. The City wants to see existing businesses grow and flourish. For some, that may mean new locations as well. Again, it is never too soon to start talking with City staff about plans and opportunities.*
- *Has any consideration been given to what the potential impacts to Parker Street will be with the new alignment of Betton Street? The current configuration of Parker Street at Wilson Street does not encourage through traffic. However, the new alignment with Betton Street may have some impact on traffic movements. The committee does not want to encourage additional traffic on Parker Street, and has discussed the possibility of implementing various traffic calming measures on Parker Street if needed.*

The final comments were related to notification of the public regarding these types of meetings, plans, etc. Is there a way to do more to directly notify potentially affected property owners, such as direct mailing of a meeting notice to those property owners within a certain radius of the project/study area? Both the City and BACTS continuously struggle with this question, and agreed to take these ideas into consideration for future use. The committee did remind the members of the public that this is still early on in the process. As the improvements are implemented, there will be additional opportunity for public comment, through the City budget cycles, the BACTS public involvement process and public hearings for individual projects.

The meeting wrapped up with Rob Kenerson thanking those in attendance and encouraging future participation. Public comments will be taken until Friday, May 19, 2006. After that date, the report will be finalized and submitted to BACTS and the City.