

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee

Public Forum 21 March 2018

On 21 March 2018, members of the Kelley's corner Steering Committee held a public forum in Room 204 of the Acton Town Hall to bring people up to date on the infrastructure improvement project and to describe Article 9, on the warrant for Spring 2018 Town Meeting. The meeting started at 7:30 pm and ended at approximately 9:00 pm.

Attendees

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee (KCSC)

- Andy Brockway
- Bob Van Meter
- Derrick Chin
- Erin Bettez
- Jon Benson
- Larry Kenah
- Peter Darlow

Planning Department

- Roland Bartl

Board of Selectmen

- Joan Gardner
- Katie Green

FinCom

- Jason Cole

Others

There were approximately 25 people in the room including those already listed. We mention two others by name because they raised key points during the discussion.

- Chris Starr, property owner, Kelley's Corner
- Terra Friedrichs

Meeting Summary

Andy Brockway presented a set of slides that described the current and future state of the infrastructure project. Although questions were asked throughout, these notes will separate the presentation itself from the discussion topics.

Presentation

Glossary

Main Street and Route 27 are the same roadway.

Massachusetts Avenue (**Mass Ave**) and Route 111 are the same roadway. Mass Ave is owned by the state.

In the notes that follow, the roadway called **Community Lane** refers to the road from Main Street at the Gulf station, past Santander Bank and Starbucks, to Mass Ave across from the CVS driveway. This roadway is currently privately owned but will be acquired by the town as part of this project.

Scope

At the start of the presentation, Andy pointed out two topics outside of the scope of this presentation.

- This meeting was not about zoning.
- This was not the formal Mass DOT public hearing.

General

- Overall sense of place (islands, trees, etc)
- Additional and longer left hand turn lanes
- Dedicated right hand turn lanes
- Landscaped islands for "traffic calming"
- Modern integrated traffic signals
- Safer pedestrian crossings
- Improved sidewalks and ADA accessibility
- Bike lanes and bike boxes

Intersection of Main Street and Mass Ave

- Traffic signal (replaced and updated)
- From the south
 - Left-turn lane
 - Through lane
 - Through/right-turn lane
- From the east
 - Left-turn lane
 - Through/right-turn lane
- From the north
 - **Left-turn lane eliminated**
 - Through lane
 - Dedicated right-turn lane
- From the west
 - **Two left-turn lanes**
 - Through/right-turn lane

Community Lane and Main Street

- Traffic signal
- No left turn from Community Lane to Main Street
- Improved pedestrian crossings
- Preferred route from Route 27 south to Mass Ave east

Community Lane and Mass Ave

- Traffic signal
- Pedestrian crossing

Charter Road and Mass Ave

This intersection is changed from earlier iterations of the project.

- Intersection with Mass Ave moved farther to the west
 - Increased visibility for drivers on Charter Road
 - Perpendicular to Mass Ave
 - Opposite Kmart driveway
- Traffic signal
 - Coordinated with signal at Mass Ave and Main Street

Mass Ave and Mass DOT

Because Route 111 is a state-owned highway, the state will assume all costs for both the appraisals and for actual property acquisition.

Article 9 Summary

The Numbers in the Article

Article 9 requests a total of \$469,000. This number is broken into two pieces.

Item	Amount
Appraisal Services	\$ 125,000
Supplemental Engineering Services	\$ 344,000

The \$344,000 is further broken into three pieces.

Item	Amount
Additional Engineering Expenses (25% phase)	\$ 73,138
Additional Engineering Expenses (75%- 100% phase)	\$ 70,011
Contingency (to complete engineering plans)	\$ 200,851

The purpose of the contingency is to deal with any unexpected expenses that might be required to complete the design and engineering plans (new required report, etc).

Additional Engineering Expenses

Several changes were made to the original design. Some of these changes were in direct response to requests made at earlier public forums. Here is a rough breakdown of engineering changes and the relative cost of each.

Item	Percent Share
Charter Road	61%
New signal at Mass Ave and CVS driveway	13%
Hosmer House	7%
Adjustments ...	14%
Expansion of Project Limits	5%

Some of these costs were already incurred in order to complete the 25% plans. Additional costs will be required to complete the engineering plans and designs.

Discussion

Some of these discussions took place during the presentation. They are presented here as separate topics.

Bueno y Sano

Chris Starr is the owner of the property where the Bueno y Sano restaurant is located. He described himself as the “most impacted landowner” by this project. A diagram showed only five parking places on the property, a number that Chris argued put the restaurant at risk.

Roland Bartl pointed out that members of the Planning Department have been working with others to reduce the impact on Bueno y Sano. One suggestion, moving the center of the roadway further to the west, would further exacerbate the mismatch in the two parts of Route 27 on the north and south sides of Mass Ave.

Appraisals

Chris Starr asked for a rough estimate for how much money the town will have to pay to various property owners for the pieces of land needed for wider roadways and other reasons. Andy pointed out that we do not have even rough estimates. Roland Bartl pointed out that the Town of Acton is legally barred from even preliminary appraisals let alone negotiations with property owners at this stage in the project. To be more specific, the appraisals must wait for submission of the 75% plan review to MassDOT.

Pedestrian Traffic, Especially Students

Several people brought up the need to have safe crosswalk opportunities for students who walk through the woods surrounding Hosmer House and cross Main Street wherever.

Andy pointed to the traffic signal at Main Street and Community Lane and the improved traffic signal at Main Street and Mass Ave. Both of these locations see increased pedestrian traffic during and after school hours.

Sidewalks

Terra Friedrichs noted that all of the sidewalks through the project are straight, requiring removal of existing trees. She asked that we consider acquiring some additional land and creating meandering sidewalks around some of these trees.

Incomplete Minutes

There was a claim that no minutes from KCSC meetings have been posted since 2015 or 2016. The KCSC clerk pointed out that KCSC meeting minutes were up to date and that minutes from meetings up to and including the most recent KCSC meeting from 22 February 2018 were available on the town Web site. He recited the steps to locate those minutes.

A later investigation located the source of confusion. There is a page called Kelley's Corner Steering Committee that is part of the Acton 2020 collection of pages. The link on that page to "minutes" pointed to meeting minutes from Acton 2020 and not Kelley's Corner Steering Committee.

Questions

There were some questions about what types of changes can be made to the project now that the 25% plan has been submitted to Mass DOT. The committee will clarify the answer to this question.

Next Steps

Town of Acton

- Article 9 will be discussed and voted on at the town meeting that begins on 2 April 2018.

Project Timeline

- June 2018 (est.) – MA DOT Public Hearing
- Fall 2018 – MPO/DOT Formal Approval
- Spring 2019 – Town meeting vote for property acquisition funds
- 2019 – Engineering and Design completion
- 2020 – Project out to bid
- 2022 – Construction begins

These notes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah