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**Meeting
Notes**

Attendees: Chris Cross, ATF Chairman, RPC Date/Time: 2/23/05
Tom Fargo, SRPC
John Burke, Portsmouth
Jack Newick, Dover
Bruce Woodruff, Dover
Sandy Hislop, Newington
Chris Waszczuk, NHDOT
Mike Dugas, NHDOT
Marc Laurin, NHDOT
Butch Waidelich, FHWA
Jim Garvin, DHR
Tim Roache, SRPC
Frank O'Callaghan, VHB
Members of the Public

Project No.: 5142500

Place: Newington Town Hall

Re: Newington-Dover (11238)
ATF Meeting No. 10

Notes taken by: Frank O'Callaghan

Chris Cross, ATF chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM and welcomed all. He explained the role and function of the Advisory Task Force (ATF), noting that members represent the communities of Newington, Dover and Portsmouth and that ATF members have offered comment and advice to the project team and assisted in refining alternatives that were being developed and considered for further study. Chris stated that members of the public would be asked to comment during the presentation of information following comments and questions from ATF members. From a schedule perspective, he noted that development and refinement of a preferred alternative would likely take a year's time, and that ideas and suggestions from the public are welcome. He also noted that a representative from the Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce would be joining the ATF, and reminded all of the wealth of information contained on the project website – www.newington-dover.com.

Chris then asked ATF members if they had any review comments on the draft ATF meeting notes of January 12, 2005. Chris Waszczuk noted two minor edits – a misspelling of Leon Kenison's name in the attendees list, and a clarification on page 3 that one rail alternative (expanded Downeaster service) was being carried forward for further study. Frank O'Callaghan noted a typographical error on page 5, where a reference to a cost comparison between Options 8 and 3 should have referenced Options 8 and 2. There being no further edits or corrections, the draft meeting minutes of January 12, 2005 were unanimously approved as revised.

Chris Cross then requested comments from the ATF members. Chris Waszczuk stated that NHDOT has received three comment letters on the Rationale Report that in general concur with the range of alternatives that are being carried forward for further study. He noted that there were several comments (i.e. location of soundwalls, minimizing impacts to Hilton Park, location of the Hilton Park connector, level of TDM, profile of the Turnpike, etc.), which would be addressed as the study progresses, and that he would summarize the response to comments at the next ATF meeting. Chris Cross then asked members of the public who were in attendance if anyone had any questions or comments. There being no public comments, Chris Waszczuk reviewed the meeting agenda and noted that copies of the agenda and other meeting information were available for those in attendance.

Frank O'Callaghan then began a macro level review of 8 and 6-lane options that varied by treatment of the Little Bay Bridges (LBB), the General Sullivan Bridge (GSB), the level of transit improvement, the level of employer-based TDM activities and the width of pavement cross section. He referred to a matrix summary (handout) that compared the general characteristics and impacts associated with each of the 10 options. Frank noted that the 8-lane options generally had more property impacts than the 6-lane options, and that the off-line replacement of the LBB (Options 4 and 5) impacted 10 buildings in comparison to the other 8-lane and 6-lane options which impact 3 buildings. He noted that Dover ATF representatives have previously expressed concern over pavement cross sections that exceed 150' in width, options that do not include some level of transit and TDM, and the lack of ridership to justify HOV lanes. Frank stated that the major impacts on Hilton Park resulted from the location of the local connector road, and that both moderate and aggressive TDM programs were combined with each of the 6-lane options. He noted that reuse of the GSB for pedestrians, bicyclists, recreation, and possibly for transit use only during reconstruction of the LBB was included in several of the options, and that there would be a serious 4(f) justification issue under all the options that included removal of the GSB due to its historical significance. Frank concluded his summary of the comparison of options by noting that the options varied in their respective ability to be modified in the future to accommodate travel demands beyond 2025, and that the 6-lane options required an auxiliary lane between Exits 3 and 6 to manage traffic that enters and exits at these interchanges and traffic that changes lanes between these exits. He then requested comments from the ATF.

Bruce Woodruff inquired as to the system-related constraints on travel demand in estimating the life span of improvements and whether the Seacoast Travel Demand Model took into account the potential for diversion to other routes when the Turnpike is congested. Frank responded that system constraints, such as the capacity of US 4 and ME 236 are reflected in the travel demand model estimates for future travel. The effects of peak spreading – expansion of the current weekday PM peak hour of traffic (4:45 – 5:45 PM) to a peak period of 3:00 – 7:00 PM under 2025 No Build traffic conditions – and peak shifting – drivers that will divert to other roadways such as NH 108, NH 125 and ME 236 as future levels of peak hour congestion increase – are also reflected in the future traffic volumes on both the Turnpike and other state and local roadways. Frank noted that as the Turnpike capacity is increased, traffic would tend to divert from local roadways to the Turnpike.

Chris Cross noted that Newington generally supports removal of the GSB due to its presence on Dover Point and the valuable space it takes up for a limited transportation benefit. With respect to the assessment of Options, he stated a preference for Option 10 (Peak Hour Shoulder Use). In comparison to Option 9 (Borrow Lane/Zipper Lane), he noted that a zipper lane might be confusing to drivers, whereas peak shoulder use (Option 10) entails permanent lanes. John Burke inquired as to the safety aspects of peak shoulder use. Frank responded that shoulder use, as proposed, would be adjacent to the median, which is safer and less confusing in comparison to the current peak period outside shoulder use along sections of I-93 and I-95/MA 128 in Massachusetts which can be confusing and challenging when driving through interchange areas.

Gail Pare expressed concern with the aesthetics of a very wide bridge and suggested an aerial or plan view rendering or model would be helpful in visualizing the various options. Chris Waszczuk noted that computer generated visualization will be completed for the Little Bay Bridges to provide before and after comparisons. He also noted that the Rationale Report contained different cross section plans associated with each of the bridge options which would be of assistance in trying to identify the scale and impacts of each option.

Bruce Woodruff stated that he would eliminate 8-lane Options 1, 2 and 4, and 6-lane Options 6, 7 and 8. He offered the following rationale: Option 1 removed the GSB, had no transit and no TDM; Option 2 removed the GSB; Option 4 removed the GSB and had no transit; Options 6, 7, and 8 require additional traffic management lanes and provide less service life than Options 9 and 10. Bruce further noted that while Option 3 removes the GSB, it does provide transit. Option 5 preserves the GSB, and provides transit and TDM programs which the Dover community supports. In comparing Options 9 and 10, he stated that a zipper lane (Option 9) will require constant maintenance, while Option 10 (peak shoulder use) provides the "best bang" for the dollar.

Tim Roache asked if the project would support employer-based TDM programs. Frank responded that such support could be directed to Transportation Management Association, such as the Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce, which promotes such activities as ride-sharing matching and providing emergency ride-home service to ride-sharing employees.

Butch Waidelich, FHWA, addressed the 4(f), historic resource issue associated with the GSB. He noted that before one could remove the GSB as part of any option, one must first demonstrate that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the bridge removal. Since there is a feasible alternative, i.e. use of the GSB for a multi-use path (bicycle and pedestrian use) and possibly transit use, the basis for GSB removal would be prudence, i.e., the cost of rehabilitation being excessive or an unreasonable expenditure of limited resources. He then noted that if a signature off-line LBB replacement bridge is considered feasible (Option 5) which would remove the GSB and cost approximately \$29 M - \$41 M more than other options (3 and 10) which would rehabilitate and widen the LBB and rehabilitate the GSB, then one cannot argue that preserving and rehabilitating the GSB is imprudent due simply to the added cost. As such, if Option 5 is carried forward, one cannot justify the removal of the GSB based on cost. He further stated that this situation needs to be understood and assessed early in the evaluation of options and alternatives.

Further discussion ensued relative to the GSB. Tom Fargo noted the deteriorated condition of the bridge, its seismic vulnerability and its profile which limits driver sight distance to 45 MPH. Chris Cross added that the bridge is very narrow, and if rehabilitated, has a limited reuse capability, and as such, the cost of rehabilitation should be relevant to the justification decision of whether or not to preserve the bridge. Jack Newick stated that feasible options need to be cost effective.

Jim Garvin noted that the DHR had just received a report authored by an historic resources specialist that documents the historic significance of the GSB at the local, state and national level. He added that the GSB scored, on a comparative basis, 28 points, 2 points below the highest rated (30 points) historic bridge in the state. Bruce Woodruff stated that the current pedestrian and bicycle use of the GSB is justification for rehabilitation, and that potential transit use is not critical to justifying its rehabilitation and reuse. John Burke added that the GSB is a system component of the bicycle system that serves the Tradeport and the City of Portsmouth.

Chris Waszczuk then asked the ATF if they thought it was possible to eliminate options that did not make sense for one or more reasons, e.g. the absence of transit or TDM? The consensus of the ATF

was that HOV lanes were not practical, at this time, since ridership estimates were relatively low and the cross section requirements result in relatively higher impacts due to pavement width. The zipper lane concept involves undesirable maintenance and operating conditions and costs. After some discussion, the ATF voted to eliminate Options 1, 4, 7, 8 and 9 from further consideration and to carry Options 2, 3, 5, 6 and 10 forward for further development. John Burke asked if further analysis of Options 2, 3, 5, 6 and 10 would be conducted. Chris Waszczuk replied that additional engineering of these options would be initiated.

Chris Waszczuk then referred to the meeting agenda and a handout summarizing first a number of reasons to retain the General Sullivan Bridge, followed by a number of reasons to remove the GSB. With respect to retaining the bridge, Chris cited: historic preservation; reuse for recreation, pedestrians and bicyclists; the future flexibility and redundancy provided by a second bridge with respect to incident management and emergency access; and congestion relief during construction of the LBB if a dedicated bus lane is feasible. He echoed Butch Waidelich's, FHWA, comments regarding the significance of the 4(f) resource, and noted that justification of removing the GSB hinged on demonstrating that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to its removal. He noted that the basis of prudence is cost. Chris also referred to the handout prepared by Jim Garvin, DHR, that highlighted the historic significance of the bridge and excerpted portions of the summary. He then enumerated a number of reasons to remove the GSB: initial costs, noting that the net initial cost to rehabilitate the bridge ranged from approximately \$8M - \$11 M which was the heart of the prudence issue; future maintenance costs, inspection costs and liability; navigational opening within the channel; and the potential to expand Hilton Park and improve E-W connectivity. Chris stated that he tried very hard to be objective in summarizing the pros and cons related to either bridge rehabilitation or bridge removal, and that there was, in his view, no clear cut or obvious conclusion. The preservation of the historic resource will be weighed against the additional cost of bridge rehabilitation and maintenance. Chris concluded his remarks on the GSB by noting the importance of construction sequencing vis-à-vis rehabilitation of the bridge. If the GSB were rehabilitated first, the current bicycle and pedestrian connection would be lost for two years, whereas the potential for a bus lane on the GSB during the construction of the LBB would be possible. If the bus lane proves to be feasible, then the next phase of construction would need to include the Exit 6 interchange, which would be necessary to take advantage of the GSB busway. If the GSB rehabilitation followed the LBB reconstruction, the pedestrian/bike connection could be temporarily provided on the LBB during the time the GSB is rehabilitated. On the other hand, if the GSB were removed, reconstruction of the LBB would likely be easier.

Tom Fargo asked, given the current condition of the bridge, could rehabilitation of the GSB wait until 2012 or the last stage of project construction. Chris responded that while there are no guarantees, the bridge is monitored periodically to ensure safe passage for pedestrians and bicycles. He noted that the floor system is very deteriorated; however, the truss elements are in reasonable condition, and that the piers, while showing some cavitation, sit on ledge. Jack Newick added that the absence of some grout in the piers is visible. Tom Fargo asked for recollection of the US Coast Guard's position. Chris responded that it is the USCG's view that the bridge cannot be ignored since it would be a hazard to navigation if it were not maintained. The disposition of the GSB will need to be addressed as part of this project.

John Burke inquired as to the mitigation costs if the GSB is removed. Chris Waszczuk suggested that, as a minimum, costs to memorialize the bridge would be required. Jim Garvin noted that discussion of mitigation costs is premature; the focus of discussion should be on preserving the bridge. If it comes to mitigation, costs will likely be more than memorialization. He noted that there are many abandoned and bypassed bridges statewide. Chris responded that he understood Jim's point, and that he only mentioned mitigation at this moment so that everyone would understand that there would be an additional cost if the GSB were removed. Chris Cross stated that he felt that retention of

the GSB is a problem for Dover Point given the narrow land mass. Bruce Woodruff concluded this discussion of the GSB by suggesting that resolution of the GSB must reflect a balance of needs: needs of residents, regional travel demand needs, and recreational needs.

Frank O'Callaghan then summarized a recent meeting among transit operators (COAST and Wildcat), regional planners and the project team that discussed the potential use of the General Sullivan Bridge as a busway during reconstruction of the Little Bay Bridges (LBB). The goal of such transit use would be to assist in traffic management during construction, the promotion of transit use, and increasing the justification for reuse and preservation of the GSB. Frank reviewed the potential routing and noted the difficulty northbound in connecting from the GSB and Dover Point Road/Boston Harbor Road to the Turnpike due to the Exit 6 configuration and lack of a northbound on-ramp. Temporary connections from Spur Road to the Turnpike were explored and deemed infeasible. As such, he noted that if the GSB were to be used as a busway for traffic management, Exit 6 would also have to be reconstructed prior to initiating reconstruction of the LBB. Transit operations through the study area consist of C&J intercity service from Dover to the Portsmouth Transportation Center (PTC) and south via I-95 to Boston, local COAST Route 2 (Rochester – Portsmouth) and Wildcat Route 4 (Durham-Portsmouth) and COAST express service between Rochester and the Tradeport/PTC scheduled for 2006. The only service deemed to benefit from the GSB busway is the COAST express service, assuming that a connector roadway from Nimble Hill Road to the Tradeport is constructed (consistent with the preferred solution for the Exit 3 interchange) to complete the transit route. Such a system would serve potentially four peak period buses southbound in the morning and northbound in the evening. The C&J service is likely to remain on the Turnpike and access the PTC directly from I-95. Both the COAST and Wildcat local service require connection to the retail activities located along Woodbury Avenue which would not benefit from the GSB route. As such, the local service will also remain on the Turnpike. Frank concluded by noting that reuse of the GSB for buses appeared potentially viable for only the COAST express service and requires the first approximately \$50M of project construction for the necessary GSB rehabilitation, Exit 6 reconstruction and Tradeport connection. This would delay reconstruction of the Little Bay Bridges.

Bruce Woodruff and John Burke both concurred that the COAST express service was the only potentially viable service that could utilize the GSB. Both emphasized that the COAST service, which is slated for start-up in 2006 and intended for commuters, needs a dedicated lane to provide consistent and effective service. Mike Dugas noted that if the GSB is rehabilitated as a first phase project, the current pedestrian and bicycle connection would be lost for approximately two years. Gail Pare asked if the GSB could be re-opened to local traffic. Frank responded that opening the GSB to local traffic was unlikely given the concern for residents' quality of life; use by employer van pooling may be viable. Both Bruce Woodruff and John Burke agreed that potential transit use of the GSB was only viable during construction of the LBB. They questioned whether an evaluation of potential ridership during construction could be evaluated. Frank observed that the COAST express service would be operational for two to four years prior to project construction, depending on availability of funding, and will have ample time to evaluate ridership. It is quite possible that, given construction related delays on the Turnpike, ridership may be sustained or increased without the GSB busway due to the convenience of not driving. John Burke noted that it is worthwhile to continue to investigate the GSB transit route given that demand for the service may increase providing a great transportation benefit for the area. He asked if VHB could estimate the difference in travel times between the GSB transit route and the Turnpike transit route. Frank responded that VHB would conduct such an analysis.

The final meeting agenda item was review and discussion of preliminary mainline Turnpike profile alternatives. Frank referred to preliminary profile and slope impact plans for Alternative 3 in Dover and Alternatives 10 and 12 in Newington. In contrasting Alternatives 10 and 12, he noted that under

Alternative 12, the industrial connector roadway and the relocated railroad right-of-way (ROW) travel under the Turnpike with the extension of Woodbury Avenue traversing above the Turnpike and connecting to the Exit 3 southbound ramps, the Tradeport and Nimble Hill Road. Woodbury Avenue would be approximately 25' above the new grade of the Turnpike, or approximately 20' above the current grade of Turnpike. Alternative 10 locates the industrial connector roadway and future railroad R.O.W. (traversing under the Turnpike) to the north of Woodbury Avenue at the location of the existing railroad R.O.W. The elevation of the Turnpike at this location is approximately 27' above the current elevation of the Turnpike. On the Dover side of the channel, Frank noted that the grade-separated connector in the vicinity of Hilton Park had been relocated to the north to minimize impacts on Hilton Park. Tom Fargo suggested that an alternative for mitigating the impact on the park would be to extend the bridge, thereby creating additional parkland below the bridge which might compensate for the parkland impact of the connector being located further south towards the channel. VHB will assess the parkland impacts of both locations.

Tom Fargo questioned the need for planning and providing for a future railroad R.O.W. to the Tradeport; he suggested eliminating the R.O.W. from the project, and in reference to Alternative 10, suggested keeping the Turnpike at-grade and flying the industrial connector roadway over the Turnpike. Chris Waszczuk responded that it was his understanding that planning for the future rail R.O.W. connection to the Tradeport was reflected in the Tradeport's masterplan and required by state legislation. He offered to research and confirm his understanding. Frank noted that his understanding was the same. Tom responded that he didn't see the connection between preserving a rail R.O.W. which, in his view, did not currently exist, and the project's purpose and need. Aside from the planning perspective, accommodating for the future rail R.O.W., as proposed under Alternative 10, resulted in potential noise and visual impacts. Frank responded that the potential for future transfer of goods movement into or from the Tradeport from trucks to rail would, if realized, have a positive impact on study area transportation efficiency, not to mention regional air quality. Chris Cross offered that there were elements of Alternative 12 that are preferable to Newington. He then asked for further public comments. There were none. He thanked all for their attendance and input. He reminded all of the next ATF meeting scheduled for March 30, 2005 at 6:30PM in Dover City Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
FEBRUARY 23, 2005

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NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
FEBRUARY 23, 2005

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NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
FEBRUARY 23, 2005

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**Meeting
Notes**

Attendees: Chris Cross, ATF Chairman, RPC
Bruce Woodruff, Dover
Jack Newick, Dover
Maria Stowell, PDA
Sandy Hislop, Newington
Chris Waszczuk, NHDOT
Marc Laurin, NHDOT
Bill Oldenberg, NHDOT
Bob Landman, Seacoast MPO
David Walker, RPC
Tim Roache, SRPC
Frank O'Callaghan, VHB
Peter Wellenberger, GBERR
Members of the Public

Date/Time: 3/30/05

Project No.: 5142500

Place: Dover City Hall

Re: Newington-Dover 11238
ATF Meeting No. 11

Notes taken by: Frank O'Callaghan

Chris Cross, ATF Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:37 PM. He welcomed all and noted that the Advisory Task Force (ATF) and project team were looking for community input. He explained that the evening's agenda included follow-up on several issues that were discussed at the previous ATF meeting (2/23/05). Chris explained that as each agenda item was presented, there would be opportunity for questions and comments from the ATF, followed by questions and comments from the public. He also noted that written comments or questions could be submitted to Chris Waszczuk following the meeting either by mail or via the project website – www.newington-dover.com, and that Chris would respond and follow-up. The ATF members, Bob Landman and David Walker then introduced themselves.

The draft ATF meeting minutes of February 23, 2005 were then reviewed. There being no comments, the draft meeting minutes were unanimously approved by the ATF. Chris Cross noted that Dave Parkinson would replace John Burke as the City of Portsmouth's representative on the ATF due to John's imminent relocation from New Hampshire to Illinois. Chris Waszczuk then thanked all for coming out and attending the meeting. He stated that at the last ATF meeting (2/23/05), he announced that review comment letters on the Rationale Report had been received from the ACOE, USEPA, the SRPC and the City of Dover. The letters generally concurred on the reasonableness of the range of alternatives that were being carried forward for further study; he added that it would have been better to have received more comments on matters of concurrence. He noted that engineering and environmental studies were on-going as part of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and that the project team continues to seek comment and input from both resource agencies and the public. He then requested Frank O'Callaghan to briefly review the comments received to

date, and the status of the project team's response, noting that some comments will require further discussion.

Frank began by noting that the Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) concurred with the reasonableness of the range of alternatives being carried forward. The USEPA also concurred with the range of alternatives being studied. The EPA encouraged consideration of combining infrastructure upgrade alternatives with TSM, TDM and Transit alternatives. They expressed concern over future peak hour operations at the Dover Toll facility. Frank noted that VHB had developed several computer model simulations of 2025 peak hour conditions, and that he would address this issue later in the agenda. The EPA expressed disappointment that a separate mesoscale (daily) air quality analysis of ozone precursors for the project area would not be conducted as part of the study. Frank responded that a regional mesoscale analysis had been recently conducted by the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) and would be updated by the RPC this year. Dave Walker confirmed that the Rockingham Planning Commission is currently updating the mesoscale air quality analysis for the Seacoast region. Frank added that the Newington-Dover project would conduct a microanalysis of potential CO hot spots. The EPA comments concluded with a recommendation that NHDOT require diesel retrofits and use of low sulphur fuels as part of the future construction specifications. Frank noted that the NHDOT would require all contractors to meet federal and state requirements at the time of construction.

The Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) commented that the Newington-Dover project is the highest transportation priority of the Seacoast MPO, that they concur with the range of alternatives being carried forward, and that the focus of the study is the Little Bay Bridges. In recognition of limited funds and fiscally constrained times, the SRPC believes the project must focus on Purpose and Need, and build flexibility into the design solutions so that future improvements by the state and others can be accommodated. While the SRPC supports employer-based TDM programs and suggests the need to allocate mitigation funds, they believe that HOV alternatives are infeasible for the 2025 design year due to the compactness of the study area and insufficient ridership. They suggest building flexibility into the current design solutions so that future conversion to an HOV alternative beyond 2025 may be possible. The SRPC supports expansion of the Downeaster rail service (Dover-Boston) and notes the difference in construction cost estimates developed by the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority – NNEPRA (\$1.2M) and VHB (\$9.9M) for adding one additional daily peak period trip between Dover and Boston. Frank explained that the difference in cost was due to equipment – VHB assumed that a new train set would need to be purchased, while NNEPRA assumes that equipment is available (at no additional cost) from AMTRAK under NNEPRA's current agreement with AMTRAK. SRPC also supports the bus alternatives under consideration and notes that reduced headways will maximize ridership. With respect to bicycle and pedestrian mobility, the SRPC notes that the General Sullivan Bridge (GSB) serves to provide system connectivity and that system connectivity needs to be preserved. The commission suggests studying bicycle infrastructure improvements which fall outside of the Newington-Dover study area; Frank noted that consideration of such bicycle improvements as part of the project would be confined to the study area. Lastly, SRPC supports the rehabilitation of the GSB, citing the benefits of system redundancy, bicycle and pedestrian system connectivity, peak period transit use during construction of the LBB and the potential of GSB use as part of a local transit route around Great Bay. The SRPC also notes that, with respect to pedestrian and bicycle system connectivity, the GSB will provide a more pleasant and appealing experience for the pedestrian and bicyclist, in comparison to alternatives which remove the GSB, and attach a multi-use path adjacent to the rehabilitated and widened LBB.

Frank then summarized the comments from the City of Dover. He began by referring to Exit 6, and comparing the diamond northbound interchange, as proposed in Alternative 3, with a 2-lane loop ramp which the City has offered for consideration as a free-flow alternative to the signalized

diamond. He noted that the diamond alternative provides a relatively high (LOS "C") level-of-service with the traffic signal operations providing gaps within the traffic stream on the Turnpike overpass that will make it easier for traffic to exit Dover Point Road and Spur Road in contrast to the free-flow, 2-lane ramp condition. He stated that the project team still has reservations with respect to driver comfort and safety while negotiating the 2-lane ramp (particularly when adjacent to tractor trailers), and noted that the loop ramp necessitates a wider and longer bridge over the Turnpike which increases construction costs by at least \$2M in comparison to the diamond interchange. The free-flow of traffic at the northbound interchange will not introduce gaps in the traffic stream – in contrast to the signalized diamond interchange – which will make it more difficult for local traffic to exit Dover Point Road and Spur Road. Frank noted that he would present traffic model simulations of both the signalized diamond and 2-lane loop ramp concepts at Exit 6 later in the meeting. The City of Dover cited the potential need for sound barriers as neighborhood mitigation. Frank responded that a noise analysis is included as part of the study, and where sound levels are estimated to exceed FHWA thresholds for noise abatement, noise mitigation will be proposed. This element of the study is awaiting refinement of alternatives and has yet to be done. The City is also concerned over the location and alignment of the proposed grade-separated roadway which traverses under the Turnpike and connects the west and east sides of Hilton Park, and the potential impact of the connector roadway on Hilton Park. The City prefers a connection location as close to the channel as possible, while minimizing impacts to the park. Frank referred to a number of slides depicting Hilton Park connector alternatives. One alternative locates the connector roadway approximately 1200' north of the channel (STA 621+75), assumes the rehabilitation of the GSB, would cost approximately \$4.2M, would minimize impacts to the park, and requires maintaining a raised profile of the Turnpike between the LBB and the connector/underpass. Two other alternatives locate the connector roadway in proximity to the channel. One assumes the rehabilitation of the GSB (STA. 611+00) and involves extending the LBB by 100' and the GSB by approximately 162' to allow the connector roadway to pass under the bridges. Construction cost would be approximately \$9.7M (\$5.5M more than the northerly alternative) due principally to the additional bridge and local roadway construction. The additional area created under the bridge would be less than the estimated impact on the park due to the local roadway connections. This area, which has been suggested to be used as potential parkland, will have a vertical clearance of approximately 15 feet. The other alternative that provides the local roadway connector adjacent to the channel assumes the off-line new signature bridge and removal of the GSB (STA. 610+75). This alternative would extend the new signature bridge by approximately 100', require approximately 1,000' of retaining wall to minimize impact to park land, and cost approximately \$7.4M (\$3.2M more than the northerly alternative). Frank noted that the off-line, signature bridge resulted in greater property impacts (an estimated taking of 10 structures) in Dover than the on-line rehabilitation/widening alternatives (an estimated taking of 3 buildings).

Frank then referred to a graphic in identifying a number of Newington-related issues that the City raised. Alternatives 10, 11 and 12 have a number of common elements: provision of a local traffic connection between Nimble Hill Road and Woodbury Avenue/Exit 3, improved industrial traffic connection to Exit 3, planning for the perpetuation of the existing railroad right-of-way connection between the Newington Branch and the Pease Tradeport, and a new roadway connection between the Tradeport and Exit 3. The City raised the question of whether or not these design elements of the Newington alternatives support the project purpose and need. Frank responded that there was a rational nexus to the project purpose and need, given the aforementioned design elements would improve either safety or transportation efficiency, or both, within the study. For example, improved local connection allows local residents and employees to avoid using the Turnpike as a local connection between Exits 3 and 4 (in contrast to existing traffic conditions which require such use of Turnpike); potential movement of goods by rail as opposed to truck would improve efficiency and air quality; and providing a second turnpike access (at Exit 3) to the Tradeport will extend the life of the Exit 1 interchange (Gosling Road/Pease Boulevard) by reducing the Tradeport-related travel at Exit 1.

With respect to passenger rail and bus transit, the City of Dover supports the expansion of the Downeaster service between Dover and Boston (Rail Alternative 1A in the Rationale Report), and generally supports the transit alternatives being carried forward for further study, noting that reduced headways will maximize potential ridership. The City does not support HOV and Borrow Lane alternatives due to the insufficient ridership demand for HOV's, and the additional cost, maintenance and operations associated with borrow or zipper lanes. The City questions the warrant for a traffic signal at the Dover Point Road intersection located just to the east of the northbound diamond interchange depicted in Alternative 3. Frank responded that final design refinements would determine the appropriateness of the signal operations. The project team is concerned with the safety of residents entering and exiting Dover Point Road. Traffic gaps provided by traffic signal operations at the diamond interchange may be sufficient such that the additional signal at Dover Point Road is unnecessary. Finally, the City noted the need for signage along Boston Harbor Road directing drivers [assuming the existing ramp from Boston Harbor Road to the southbound Turnpike on-ramp is closed under implementation of a TSM improvement recommendation] to enter the southbound on-ramp from US4; the City also questions the need to close the ramp. Frank responded that this TSM improvement plan is still under review and stated that there will be a future public information meeting prior to finalizing the plan and programming its implementation.

At this point, Frank paused for comments and questions pertaining to his summary of review comments on the Rationale Report. Chris Waszczuk noted that the PDA had previously commented on the importance of retaining the rail right-of-way as regards to redevelopment at the Tradeport, and as reflected in the 1995 update of the Tradeport's Development Plan. Chris distributed a copy of a letter from the Pease Facilities Director to the ATF committee. He explained that the letter notes the rationale for the rail corridor preservation and includes excerpts of the Pease Development Plan Update that are relevant to rail access. Maria Stowell added that the 1995 update to the Development Plan was mandated by the state legislature, and that any deviation from the plan would require legislature approval.

Bruce Woodruff had several comments. With respect to transit, he stated that the General Sullivan Bridge could potentially serve the proposed COAST express service scheduled for 2006, and noted the problem connecting northbound to the Turnpike in Dover after crossing the GSB. He suggested buses could utilize the current one-way connection between the LBB & GSB that flows easterly beneath the LBB and leads to Exit 5. He suggested a need for a master plan for Hilton Park that would reflect how pedestrians, bicycle and vehicle connections could be accommodated while minimizing impacts to the Park. He noted that providing the local roadway connector to the north of the channel (STA. 621+75) results in retaining walls to maintain the elevated profile of the Turnpike to traverse over the local roadway. He suggested that a combination of elevating the Turnpike and lowering the grade of the connector road may be necessary to minimize the effect on Dover Point. Chris Waszczuk concurred with regards to the Turnpike profile impacts and noted that using as low of a grade as possible for the connector road will be investigated. He added that the pedestrian and bicycle connection could be provided adjacent to the channel – as it is today – assuming that the roadway connector is located to the north of the channel. Chris explained that during construction of the LBB, the area between the LBB & GSB will be consumed by the LBB widening and buses will not be able to traverse through the area to gain access to Exit 5 and proceed northbound on the Turnpike. In the event that the GSB is identified for rehabilitation and used by buses during construction, NB access to the Turnpike will need to be provided by the concurrent construction of the Exit 6 Interchange with the GSB rehabilitation. With respect to the local design elements of the Newington alternatives, Bruce stated that local connections should be secondary to addressing the bridge related issues. Chris Cross added that potential property costs associated with the local connections could be significant, depending on location and alignment.

John Scruton asked if the bridges could be extended to the state motor vehicle building located to the north in an attempt to avoid impacting Hilton Park. Chris Waszczuk responded that such a proposal was similar to a double-decker bridge alternative that was dismissed early on due to its extraordinary cost, and its unpleasant and unsightly appearance.

John Scruton commented that the relatively high density of current traffic flows contributed to the potential for fender-bender type accidents, and that response to study area incidents is constrained by the narrowness of the bridges. Bob Landman stated his concurrence with EPA's concern with future peak hour operations at the Dover toll facility. In his view, the toll facility should be part of the study, and that relocation of the toll facility to the Little Bay Bridges would address the issue of toll diversion by area travelers. Chris Waszczuk responded that tolls are a state legislative issue, not a project specific element, and cannot be allowed to handcuff the progress of this important project. VHB has analyzed toll plaza operations and found them to be satisfactory beyond 2025 with implementation of EZ Pass. He added that Frank would address future toll operations later in the meeting agenda.

Bob Landman noted that new park and ride locations, as recommended in the Rationale Report, need to avoid unintended consequences, such as free long term parking at the Portsmouth Transportation Center. It appears to him that some business and vacation travelers are parking at the PTC, taking the C&J bus to Logan International Airport, and traveling for extended periods of time. In his view, there should be no overnight parking at any state funded park and ride facility. Lloyd Melanson inquired as to the study area locations that were monitored for noise. He noted that southbound travel is noisier than northbound travel. Chris Waszczuk responded that study area locations that were measured for noise to construct and calibrate a model for estimating future noise levels are located on a plan contained in the Scoping Report. He asked Marc Laurin, NHDOT to follow-up and provide Mr. Melanson with a copy of the plan. Alice Briggs of Pomeroy Cove stated that she believes that the 2-lane loop ramp alternative for northbound exiting traffic at Exit 6 will be dangerous and noted the recent oil tanker truck that overturned on the existing loop ramp; she prefers the diamond-type interchange, and favors signal operation at the Dover Point Road intersection located to the east of the signalized diamond interchange since vehicles may have difficulty exiting lower Dover Point Road. Rick Everett questioned whether or not the City of Dover owned Hilton Park. He expressed concern with potential impact to Hilton Park and questioned why a connection from the east side of the park to Boston Harbor Road was necessary. Chris Waszczuk responded that Hilton Park is owned by the state (Bureau of Turnpikes), not the city, and that as a 4(f) resource, it is to be protected and, as such, impacts to the park are to be avoided if possible; if impacts are unavoidable they are to be minimized and mitigated. He noted that Exit 5 (the current access and egress to the park) would be discontinued in the future, and that a frontage road adjacent to Pomeroy Cove and connecting to Exit 6 was infeasible due to environmental and property impacts. As such, grade-separated connections under the Turnpike are being pursued as previously described and discussed. Alice Briggs questioned the necessity of providing the northbound on-ramp to the Turnpike at Exit 6. Chris Waszczuk responded that, while the on-ramp volume may be relatively low, constructing the on-ramp provided interchange system integrity at a relatively low cost.

There being no further questions or comments, Frank proceeded to show and describe a series of computer model simulations of 2025 peak hour traffic flow conditions along the Turnpike between Exits 3 and 6 under 6 and 8-lane Turnpike alternatives. This comparison clearly demonstrated the need for an auxiliary lane in each direction, in addition to 3 through lanes in each direction, to be carried between Exits 3 and 6 to accommodate the volume of traffic that enters and exits and changes lanes between Exits 3 and 6. These operations are critical southbound in the 2025 AM peak hour, and northbound in the 2025 PM peak hour. He also simulated and compared the northbound Exit 6 off-ramp 2025 PM peak hour operations under both the signalized-diamond and 2-lane loop ramp alternatives. As he had described previously under the review of Rationale Report review comments,

the diamond interchange off-ramp operations will be more than satisfactory (LOS "C") and the queuing of off-ramp vehicles will be contained to the off-ramp. The 2-lane loop ramp raises safety issues and involves additional bridge related costs (\$2M). In light of the peak hour operations under the signalized diamond interchange, Frank referred to the 2-lane loop ramp alternatives as a questionable solution in search of a problem. Frank concluded the review of traffic simulations by focusing on 2025 northbound PM peak hour operations at the Dover Toll plaza. Assuming implementation of the EZ Pass system, he compared operations under both the diamond and 2-lane loop ramp alternatives. Operations under the signalized diamond interchange alternative are satisfactory. However, due to the shorter distance of 4-lane storage between the Toll Plaza and the northbound on-ramp under the 2-lane loop ramp alternative in comparison to the signalized diamond alternative, vehicle queuing under the 2-lane loop ramp is significantly greater and will block the northbound entrance ramp to the Turnpike.

Based on review of the traffic model simulations, there was unanimous consensus on the need for 3 – through lanes and 1 – auxiliary lane in each direction extending between Exits 3 and 6 to safely and efficiently handle the 2025 travel demand. There being no questions or comments, Frank proceeded to discuss the profile of the Little Bay Bridges in the context of design criteria. He referred to a graphic depicting the existing profile of the LBB which corresponds to a 60 MPH design speed, and a 70 MPH design speed profile overlayed on the existing (60 MPH) profile. He noted that the 70 MPH profile provided slightly more stopping sight distance for the driver, and that the grades on the bridge would be approximately 3.3 percent in comparison to the 3.5 percent grades on the 60 MPH profile which corresponds to the existing profile. He stressed that the driver's sight distance associated with 60 MPH is not a safety deficiency, in comparison to the narrow shoulders (2'-0" to 2'-3") on the existing bridges which are safety deficiencies. He noted that the 60 MPH design speed is 10 MPH greater than the 50 MPH posted speed for the bridges and study area, and that the 50 MPH posted speed was appropriate for the study area. The Turnpike study area is a zone of transition where abutting land use is developed, interchange spacing is close, and there are relatively high volumes of traffic entering and exiting the Turnpike and changing lanes. Under these conditions, drivers expect reduced speeds, similar to comparable sections of urban roadways such as I-93 through Manchester and Concord, I-293 in Manchester and I-95 in Portsmouth and Kittery, Maine. The Little Bay Bridge rehabilitation/widening alternatives maintain the 60 MPH design speed profile, address the substandard shoulder deficiencies, improve the traffic weaving conditions which are prevalent on the existing approaches to the bridges, increase capacity on the Turnpike and bridges and have significantly less impacts to Hilton Park and property owners than widening alternatives to the west of the existing LBB that provide a 70 MPH design speed. In response to a question, Frank noted that under current PM peak hour condition, traffic flows freely northbound on the bridge constrained by the narrow shoulders and density of traffic, yet, at the same time, traffic congestion and long delays are prevalent from Exit 1 north to the bridge approach. This congestion and delay are due, not to the profile of the bridge, but due to the lack of auxiliary lanes to accommodate traffic entering, exiting and changing lanes.

Following Frank's presentation, Bob Landman stated that he concurred that the existing bridge profile is not the problem, and that improving traffic operations on the bridge approaches was important. Bruce Woodruff also agreed and said that he was convinced that the existing bridge profile is not a problem. Jack Newick observed that recent accidents southbound in Newington attest to the lack of adequate auxiliary lanes on the bridge approaches. Chris Waszczuk noted that it is NHDOT's position that the existing bridge profile is not a safety issue provided that the shoulder areas are improved and the bridge approaches are addressed as proposed.

There being no further discussion on the bridge profile and design criteria, Frank then addressed the concept of peak hour shoulder use as developed under 6-lane combined options. He noted that the objectives of utilizing a widened shoulder for travel during peak hours are to increase capacity,

minimize environmental and property impacts due to the reduced width of cross-section, and to reduce cost without compromising safety. He explained that inside (median) shoulder use was preferable to outside shoulder use to avoid conflicts between through traffic and traffic entering and exiting the Turnpike at interchange areas, and that outside shoulders are preferred by drivers for emergency stops, and by emergency responders to an incident. Use of the widened shoulder would be unrestricted, i.e., not restricted to HOV's. Frank explained that the ATF had previously expressed support for this 6-lane alternative, particularly in comparison to the borrow lane or zipper lane alternative which requires additional maintenance and operations costs. Recent experience of peak hour shoulder use around the country has been limited to the retrofitting of existing facilities to increase capacity in highly congested corridors. For the most part, these projects have been implemented as interim measures affording time to plan, design, fund and implement more permanent solutions, if feasible. Accident experience has been mixed. In some cases, the frequency of accidents slightly increased following the introduction and operation of peak shoulder use; in other cases, accident frequency actually decreased. Research suggests that proposals for peak hour shoulder use should be reviewed on a case by case basis, and consider such factors as inside vs. outside shoulder lane, length of shoulder use section of highway, width of shoulder and lateral distance between edge of shoulder and median barrier, average volume of peak hour traffic per lane, percentage of truck traffic, HOV vs. unrestricted use of the shoulder area, etc. That being said, FHWA is questioning the viability of peak hour shoulder use as a long term solution, and is currently conducting research and formulating an opinion as to whether or not they can support such an alternative for the long term. Frank concluded by stating that the peak hour shoulder use alternative, described as Option 10 under the 6-lane options and as supported by the ATF, may be infeasible given FHWA's current position.

Discussion then ensued regarding both the 8-lane and 6-lane combination alternatives. From the previous two ATF meetings, 8-lane Option 1 (widen/rehabilitate the LBB; remove GSB; no TDM and no Transit) and Option 4 (New Bridge off line; remove GSB; no TDM and no Transit) had been removed from further consideration. Chris Waszczuk suggested that Option 5 (New Bridge, remove GSB, TDM and Transit) also be removed from further consideration due to impacts, costs, and 4(f) considerations. The greater impacts of the off-line alignment were discussed earlier in the meeting; Chris added that given funding constraints and the fact that the profile of the existing bridge is not a safety deficiency, the NHDOT would not support a new signature bridge in light of additional costs and the prudence - related 4(f) issue of removing the General Sullivan Bridge. The ATF concurred with the dropping of Option 5, and continued discussing the remaining Options and the cost of rehabilitating the GSB. Chris Cross noted that the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) has no funding and is looking to NHDOT to fund the rehabilitation. Chris Waszczuk asked ATF members if they supported the idea of rehabilitating the GSB. He noted that the project team and ATF need to hear more from the communities on the GSB issue. In response to a question, Chris noted that the GSB rehabilitation cost would range from \$18M (for pedestrian/bicyclists) to \$21M (transit vehicles) and the net additional cost of GSB rehabilitation versus GSB removal and provision of a multi-use path as part of a widened and rehabilitated Little Bay Bridge is approximately \$8 - \$11M, depending on the loading requirements. Chris added that DHR is on record favoring preservation and rehabilitation of the GSB in place. Chris responded to some additional questions, noting that the multi-use path could not be suspended under a widened and rehabilitated LBB, due to the navigational requirement by the USCG that the existing vertical clearance (52' at mean low tide) above the channel be retained. He noted that lead paint removal is reflected in the GSB rehabilitation costs. Bob Landman noted that there would be future maintenance costs following rehabilitation. Chris concurred, but noted that the maintenance costs would be less if future use is restricted to pedestrians and bicyclists, but that the incremental rehabilitated cost (\$3M) for vehicular loads would provide bridge system redundancy which has merit vis-à-vis incident management and future transportation flexibility for the area.

Bruce Woodruff suggested that 8-lane Option 2 (Widen/Rehabilitate LBB, Remove GSB, TDM and Transit) and Option 3 (Widen/Rehabilitate LBB, Rehabilitate GSB, TDM and Transit) and 6-lane Option 10 (Peak Hour Shoulder Use, Widen/Rehabilitate LBB, Rehabilitate GSB, TDM and Transit) be carried forward and the GSB be rehabilitated to carry vehicular loadings. Chris Waszczuk responded that the 6-lane Option 6 (Widen/Rehabilitation LBB, Rehabilitate GSB, TDM and Transit) should also remain from an alternatives evaluation perspective, recognizing that, without auxiliary lanes, Option 6 will not adequately serve the 2025 travel demand. Bruce responded that despite FHWA's reservations, Option 10 should also be retained. Bob Landman suggested that if Option 10 is unacceptable to FHWA, Option 9 (Borrow/Zipper Lane, Widen/Rehabilitation of LBB, Rehabilitation of GSB, TDM and Transit) may be the only 6-lane option that is viable. While the ATF clearly favors Option 10 to Option 9, Frank O'Callaghan suggested that it would be premature, based on the analysis and evaluation to date, to dismiss Option 9. Chris Cross concurred. Chris Waszczuk suggested that the FHWA may also have reservations about Option 9 as a long-term solution, and suggested that FHWA be requested to review both Options 9 and 10. Bob Landman suggested that a video clip of zipper lane operations may be helpful in understanding the operational and maintenance issues related to the borrow lane concept.

Chris Waszczuk, in summarizing, noted that Options 2, 3, 6, 9 and 10 remain on the table, with the ATF awaiting FHWA comments on Options 9 and 10. Chris asked if there was any more public comment. Hearing none, he suggested scheduling public information meetings in each community during the week of May 16th. He questioned whether an Advisory Task Force meeting prior to the Informational meetings was necessary to discuss refinement of the alternatives. It was agreed to hold an ATF meeting on May 4th at the Newington Town Hall. Chris noted that another ATF meeting has been scheduled for June 29, 2005 to discuss the status of the indirect and cumulative impact analysis.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
DOVER CITY HALL
MARCH 30, 2005

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NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
DOVER CITY HALL
MARCH 30, 2005

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**Meeting
Notes**

Attendees: Chris Cross, ATF, RPC
Tom Fargo, SRPC
Steve Parkinson, Portsmouth
Sandy Hislop, Newington
Jack Newick, Dover
Rick Card, Greater Dover Chamber
of Commerce
Peter Wellenberger, NHF&G
Bill O'Donnell, FHWA
Maria Stowell, PDA
Chris Waszczuk, NHDOT
Frank O'Callaghan, VHB
Tim Roach, SRPC
Bob Landman, MPO

Date/Time: May 4, 2005

Project No.: 51425.00

Place: Newington Town Hall

Re: Newington-Dover 11238
ATF Meeting No. 12

Notes taken by: Frank O'Callaghan

Chris Cross, ATF Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:48 pm. He welcomed all and asked members of the ATF in attendance to introduce themselves. Following the self-introductions, Chris noted that the Newington-Dover project addresses a major transportation need of the Seacoast region, and that public input is welcome. He stated that the current Phase 3 of the project is a process of refining alternatives over the next 6 months to identify a preferred alternative for both the Little Bay Bridges and the study area interchanges. Following the environmental impact statement with the necessary approvals, the preferred alternative would be designed, permitted and constructed. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2010; work will begin sooner if additional funding becomes available. Chris then reviewed the meeting protocol: the project team would present information, to be followed by questions and comments from the ATF, to be followed by questions and comments from the public in attendance.

The draft ATF meeting minutes of March 30, 2005, were then reviewed. There were two (2) minor edits noted by Tom Fargo and Frank O'Callaghan, and the draft minutes, as edited, were approved. Chris Cross requested comments from the ATF. There being none, he turned to Chris Waszczuk. Chris Waszczuk welcomed attendees, noting that the ATF has been meeting lately on a monthly basis, reviewing the traffic data, looking more closely at the resources and constraints in the area, and continuing the refinement and development of the infrastructure improvement alternatives being considered for Newington and Dover. Chris referenced the revised Alternatives for Newington (10A and 12A) and Dover (2 and 3), which were displayed on the walls of the meeting room. He noted that additional engineering studies had revised both the horizontal and vertical alignments of the

Turnpike and resultant slope impacts due to preliminary constructability reviews. He also noted that there were Public Informational Meetings scheduled for May 18th in Dover and May 19th in Newington. Chris then asked Frank O'Callaghan to summarize and review the latest modifications to the Exit 3 (Newington) and Exit 6 (Dover) interchange alternatives.

Frank proceeded to describe the most recent modification to Alternative 10, noting that the mainline of the Turnpike had been shifted approximately 80' to the west in order to simplify the construction of the Woodbury Avenue overpass and improve traffic management during construction; the Exit 3 SB on-ramp had been converted from a diamond-type configuration to a loop ramp in order to maximize traffic weaving distance between the Exit 3 on-ramp and the Exit 1 off-ramp; the elevation of the grade-separated railroad R.O.W. and industrial traffic connector to Exit 3 had been lowered by approximately 8 feet which lowered the mainline profile of the Turnpike; and that the limits of slope impacts had been calculated and depicted on the plan. He referred to these revisions as Alternative 10A. Frank then compared the lowered profile of Alternative 10A to Alternative 10.

Frank then described refinements to Alternative 12 noting similarities to Alternative 10A such as the slight horizontal shift in alignment to the west to improve constructability and traffic management at Exit 3, and the depiction of the limits of slope impacts due to construction. He also noted that the grade-separated railroad R.O.W. and industrial traffic connector to Exit 3 had been shifted approximately 900 feet to the north to improve the constructability of the Exit 3 interchange and to avoid an existing utility corridor, paralleling Patterson Lane, and that the roadway connector to the Tradeport had been realigned to avoid the potential prime wetland area located west of Railway Brook. Frank referred to these modifications as Alternative 12A, and compared the mainline Turnpike profiles of Alternatives 12 and 12A, noting that the elevation of the grade-separated railroad R.O.W. and industrial traffic connector had been lowered in Alternative 12A, in similar fashion to Alternative 10A. He noted that the Turnpike, under Alternative 12A, would be approximately 18'-20' above the elevation of the existing NB barrel of the Turnpike at the point where the railroad R.O.W. and industrial traffic connector passed under the Turnpike.

With respect to Alternatives 2 and 3 in Dover, Frank stated that the only refinements pertain to the identification of the limits of potential slope impacts due to construction, and that the Boston Harbor Road/Spur Road intersection had been relocated approximately 150' to the east to increase vehicle storage lanes (Alternative 2) and transition areas for the lane drop, westbound on US 4, prior to the Scammell Bridge. He also reviewed the Turnpike's profile between the Little Bay Bridges and Exit 6. He noted that the Hilton Park Connector was located approximately 1,200' north of the bridges, where the Turnpike would be approximately 18' above the existing elevation of the Turnpike to provide clearance for the Hilton Park Connector below. An alternative location for the connector had been considered adjacent to the channel, but Frank explained that potential impacts to parkland, flood plain issues, and additional cost (\$5.5 M) deemed this location infeasible in comparison to the northerly alternative.

At this point, Frank paused for comments and questions. Discussion ensued concerning the local connection between Woodbury Avenue and Nimble Hill Road proposed under Alternatives 10A and 12A. Frank noted that the intent of the connector road was to remove local traffic from using the Turnpike as a connection between Exits 3 and 4, and that the reconfiguration of Exit 3 (Woodbury Avenue) would calm traffic exiting the Turnpike in comparison to the existing free-flow condition for southbound traffic entering Woodbury Avenue. Bob Landman suggested that the reconfigured Exit 3 interchange struck him as being too complex. Tom Fargo stated that ["too much pavement"] there was too much emphasis on the local connections which support local development, which in his view, is not necessarily related to the project purpose and need. Cliff Abbott, Newington resident, questioned the objective of the roads in Newington. Chris Cross responded that the Tradeport connection to Exit 3 and improved access for industrial related traffic to Exit 3 were consistent with

the Town of Newington's transportation planning; he also stated that Newington officials are sensitive to the criticism of some concerning the scale of local connections and have developed some preliminary thoughts on how to reduce the scale of these connections. He indicated that he would share these preliminary thoughts with the project team at the conclusion of the meeting. Chris Waszczuk reminded all that there is currently inadequate spacing between the existing interchanges and that the Tradeport connection to Exit 3 (which will divert traffic from Exit 1 and thereby increase the service life of Exit 1), in conjunction with planning for a future rail connection to the Tradeport (which could divert future trucks from the Turnpike and have a positive impact on air quality) and improved access to the Turnpike for heavy commercial traffic will improve traffic operations and safety conditions within the study area, and as such, are in fact related to the project purpose and need.

Tom Fargo suggested that existing pavement which may be abandoned – depending on the alternative – should be better identified on the plans. He added that potential mitigation areas could also be identified. Bob Landman suggested that the local connection between Nimble Hill Road (Exit 4) and Woodbury Avenue (Exit 3) could be accomplished via the “soon to be” 2-way connection between Nimble Hill Road and River Road traversing under the Turnpike, and then proceeding along Shattuck Way to Piscataqua Drive which intersects with Woodbury Avenue, as opposed to the proposed connection paralleling the western side of the Turnpike. Tom Fargo suggested connecting Fox Point Road to Arboretum Drive and its proposed connection to Exit 3 as another alternative for local connections.

In response to a question of whether or not the lack of capacity on the Little Bay Bridges is the principal traffic problem, Chris Waszczuk responded that, in addition to the lack of capacity on the bridges, the bridge approaches are problematic due to the volume of traffic that is entering and exiting the Turnpike, and the proximity of interchanges to one another which compounds the peak hour problem of traffic changing lanes and entering/exiting the Turnpike within the study area. At the request of the owner of the Mobil/Exxon convenience station, Frank explained how drivers would access his facility from the Turnpike under Alternatives 10A and 12A. Without access from the Turnpike, the property owner stated that his business would be adversely impacted.

Michael Martoni, Coleman Drive, stated that he was concerned about potential noise impacts, and that while acknowledging that access from Nimble Hill Road was treacherous under existing AM peak hour conditions, he saw no need for a west side local connector, as proposed, assuming implementation of the interim safety improvements. Chris Waszczuk noted that noise impacts would be addressed as part of the project.

An attendee suggested that additional access to the Tradeport may be planned to the south of Exit 1 (Pease Boulevard/Gosling Road) which would make the proposed connection to the Tradeport from Exit 3 unnecessary. Frank O'Callaghan responded that he was very familiar with the transportation master plan of the Tradeport, and stated that no such Turnpike access located to the south of Exit 1 is planned. Transportation planning for the Tradeport has always envisioned a potential connection to the north of Exit 1. Steve Parkinson concurred, noting that access via the closed driveway located south of Exit 1 is too close to the I-95 off-ramps and the Portsmouth traffic circle and would be problematic from a traffic operations and safety perspective.

With respect to the proposed location of the Hilton Park connector, Tom Fargo concurred that the floodplain, parkland and cost-related issues make the northerly location preferable to the channel location, as previously described. Responding to a question, Frank noted that the Turnpike at this location would be approximately 18' above the existing elevation of the Turnpike.

Jack Newick stated that wind direction would be critical to the noise analysis, noting sounds carry across the channel depending on the velocity and direction of the wind.

There being no further comment or questions, Frank summarized the advantages of the diamond-type interchange on the northbound barrel of the Turnpike at Exit 6, in comparison to the 2-lane loop ramp suggested by others for consideration. The signalized diamond interchange operates at a satisfactory level of service, will introduce gaps in the overpass traffic stream that will make it easier to exit Dover Pont Road and Spur Road, will save approximately \$2M in bridge costs and will provide a potentially safer traffic operation than the free-flowing 2-lane loop ramp alternative.

Cliff Abbott questioned why a signalized diamond type of interchange was proposed instead of perpetuating the free-flowing loop type of configuration that exists today. Chris Waszczuk noted that a traffic simulation depicting both conditions was presented at the previous Advisory Task Force meeting, which showed the signalized diamond interchange operating at a high level of service in the design year (2025). He noted that the simulation would be presented again at the upcoming Informational meetings.

Frank then reviewed the status of 8-lane and 6-lane options. He noted that only two (2) 8-lane options remain, both of which entail rehabilitation and widening of the Little Bay Bridges (LBB) combined with transit and employer-based TDM actions. The only difference between alternatives is whether or not the General Sullivan Bridge (GSB) is rehabilitated (Option 3) or removed (Option 2) and replaced by a multi-use path attached to the LBB. The 6-lane options remaining include the 6-lane typical (Option 6) which entails the rehabilitation/widening of the LBB, rehabilitation of the GSB, transit and employer-based TDM actions. Unfortunately, this 6-lane option does not meet the 2025 travel demand, with system breakdown projected to occur around 2017. In an effort to increase capacity and minimize impacts, the borrow lane or zipper lane (Option 9) and peak hour shoulder use (Option 10) concepts were developed. Similar to Option 6, both the LBB and GSB are rehabilitated and combined with transit and TDM actions. In contrast to Option 6, both provide four (4) travel lanes in the peak direction during the peak hour of traffic. The peak shoulder use has the advantage over the borrow lane concept of having lower operating and maintenance costs. Frank noted, however, that FHWA has reservations about both concepts, and is reluctant to endorse either Option 9 or 10 as a long-term solution. At this point, Frank deferred to Bill O'Donnell. Bill noted that FHWA has just recently drafted comments for submittal to NHDOT, and that in summary, FHWA could not support either the peak hour shoulder use or borrow lane concept. In cases where FHWA has endorsed such concepts, they have been in highly congested corridors, and have been implemented as interim measures to provide time necessary to design, permit, fund and construct long term solutions that meet long-term needs. Bill noted that FHWA has concerns of safety and driver confusion for those not familiar with study area traffic and roadway conditions. He cited traffic accident research studies that noted increases in accidents where shoulders have been employed during peak hours in transitions from 4 to 5 lanes, and lack of research data regarding the transition from 3 to 4 lanes as the study area case would be. He further noted that while 6-lanes (Option 6) fails from a 2025 traffic operations performance perspective, and that 8-lanes (Options 2 and 3) provide a satisfactory level of 2025 traffic service, there is not much difference in roadway and bridge footprints (from an impacts perspective) between the 6- and 8-lane options. As such, FHWA will not support either Option 9 or Option 10.

Bob Landman commented that West Coast facilities don't provide shoulders in some cases, and in others, provide very narrow shoulders. Bill replied that those are examples of interim retrofits of existing facilities, not the design and construction of a new facility with built-in deficiencies or design exceptions. Bob noted the sensitive environmental condition of the study area suggesting special consideration may be warranted. Bill responded that we should not be satisfied with built-in deficiencies. Bob inquired as to the possibility of utilizing a moveable center median, in a

borrow/zipper lane fashion. Chris Waszczuk replied that the Exit 3 and Exit 6 bridges that traverse the Turnpike require center piers for support which preclude the possibility of moving a single center median from one side of the Turnpike to the other.

Tom Fargo noted that 8-lanes will be adequate for the future given the regional demographics and the origins and destinations of travel. Gail Pare asked if 8-lanes would be required throughout the study area. Frank O'Callaghan responded that 8-lanes would be required between Exits 3 and 6, and that the 4th lane in each direction was an auxiliary or traffic management lane connecting the on and off-ramp lanes at each interchange. Gail suggested that an aerial photograph or plan view of 6- and 8-lane bridge alternatives would help her and probably others visualize the difference in scale between 6- and 8-lanes. Chris Waszczuk replied that a rendering would be developed as concepts are further developed. Bob Landman stated that he was comfortable with 6-lanes, but not yet supportive of 8-lanes. Gail Pare raised the issue of HOT lanes. Chris Waszczuk responded that such a concept would be inefficient in our compact study area, and would require a radical change in travel behavior. Chris Cross noted that 8 lanes is not excessive in his view, particularly in light of the continued attractiveness and growth of the Seacoast area.

Tom Fargo observed that current traffic patterns reflect regional employment and housing patterns, to wit, that lack of housing opportunities south of the LBB result in many residents residing north of the LBB and commuting south of the bridge to work. Such commuting patterns limit the flexibility for TDM actions such as ridesharing and variable work hours due to family commitments such as day care and school drop-offs. Bob Landman opined that we should learn from metropolitan areas, such as Denver, Colorado, where transit has been integrated into the mainstream of daily activities; as such, NH should invest more in transit. Bill O'Donnell replied that the FHWA supports buses and transit as part of comprehensive transportation solutions, such as the improvements recommended for the I-93 corridor. Bob responded that such investments should not benefit private enterprise, such as allowing free overnight parking at the Portsmouth Transportation Center (PTC) which, in his view, amounts to a subsidization of C&J service to Boston and Logan International Airport.

At this point, Chris Cross asked for any final comments from the ATF. Sandy Hislop stated that Newington residents prefer provision of an off-ramp to Nimble Hill Road, and that 8-lanes is preferable to 6-lanes given the future travel demand. Rick Card concurred with respect to the 8-lane options, noting that there are few alternate travel routes to the Turnpike, which explains the heavy travel demand; he also noted that tourist traffic is largely unfamiliar with the area.

Chris Cross thanked all for their interest and comments, which the project team will consider. He noted that Public Information Meetings are scheduled for May 18, 2005, in Dover and May 19, 2005, in Newington. At these meetings, a project overview, and summary of project status will be presented, and additional input solicited. He reminded all that the objective of the study is to reach consensus on a smart and comprehensive transportation solution for the study area. Chris Waszczuk noted that the latest refinements to Alternatives – 10A, 12A, 2 and 3 – would be posted on the project website as soon as possible, and that the traffic model simulations and level of service videos would be available at the Public Information Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
MAY 4, 2005

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NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
MAY 4, 2005

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**Meeting
Notes**

Attendees: Chris Cross, ATF Chair, RPC
Tom Fargo, SRPC
Steve Parkinson, Portsmouth
Jack Newick, Dover
Sandy Hislop, Newington
Bruce Woodruff, Dover
Maria Stowell, PDA
Bill O'Donnell, FHWA
Chris Waszczuk, NHDOT
Marc Laurin, NHDOT
Mike Dugas, NHDOT
Tim Roache, SRPC
Tom Wholley, VHB
Frank O'Callaghan, VHB

Date/Time: July 6, 2005

Project No.: 51425

Place: Newington Town Hall

Re: Newington-Dover 11238
ATF Meeting No. 13

Notes taken by: Frank O'Callaghan

Cosmos Iocovozzi, Chairman of the Newington Board of Selectmen, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. On behalf of the Town of Newington, he thanked the NHDOT for convening the ATF meeting in Newington to hear directly from Newington officials and residents on the development and modifications of Newington project alternatives. He noted that representatives of Newington's Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Conservation Commission were in attendance in addition to Town residents. He asked for comments or questions from Town officials. Hearing none, he stated that Town officials would likely comment following the project team's presentation. At this point, Chris Cross, ATF Chairman, welcomed all. He noted the importance of the project, and the importance of the input from Newington officials and residents that the project team was seeking. He stated that the Draft EIS was scheduled for completion at the end of 2005.

Chris Cross then referred to the draft ATF meeting minutes of May 4, 2005 and asked if any member of the ATF had questions or comments. There being no questions or comments, the Draft meeting minutes were approved. Following self introductions by the ATF members, Chris requested comments from the ATF. There being none, he turned to Chris Waszczuk. Chris welcomed all and thanked the Newington Selectmen for inviting the project team to present the latest project information and for the opportunity to listen and respond to the concerns, comments and questions of Newington officials and residents. Chris stated that the project is presently in the middle of Phase 3, where the Alternatives are being engineered, refined, and impacts assessed with the intent to identify a preferred alternative prior to the Draft EIS being completed and published. He noted that the project team has attempted to be open to local input, and has modified the Newington alternatives (Alternatives 10A & 12A) based on local input submitted at the May 4, 2005 ATF meeting.

He noted that the project team has reviewed the Town's concept (Alternative 13) and is prepared to discuss merits of the new alternative. He also noted that it is apparent through the course of the Feasibility Study and the earlier phases of the current study (Phases 1 & 2) that some of the original Town priorities have changed. Chris expressed hope that following this evening's meeting, some clear and consistent direction could be provided regarding the Newington Alternatives to allow the project to continue its progression towards the completion of the DEIS and the scheduling of a formal Public Hearing next Spring. He then reviewed the meeting agenda and turned to Frank O'Callaghan to summarize feedback from the Public Informational Meetings of May 18 and 19, 2005.

Frank summarized feedback from the public informational meetings under several broad categories. He noted that Modifications to the Newington Alternatives (Alternatives 10A and 12A) would be discussed in detail later in the presentation, and that such discussion would include review of a Town-generated alternative (Alternative 13). Noise comments pertained to analysis methodologies, assumptions and time periods; abatement criteria; potential mitigation areas; and the design and effectiveness of noise barriers. Several aspects of the General Sullivan Bridge were noted: historical significance, reuse alternatives, cost of rehabilitation, alternative to rehabilitation, and state and federal requirements to assess practical and prudent alternatives to impacting the historical resource. A number of traffic operational questions/issues were noted: Can Exit 4, northbound be eliminated? (No); can Exit 5 be retained? (No); the signalized-diamond interchange advantages over a two-lane loop ramp operation at Exit 6 northbound; the lack of a practical 6-lane alternative, in combination with expanded transit and employer-based TDM, that adequately meets 2025 travel demands; Tradeport and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard traffic impacts on the Turnpike; signal operations at the Spur Road/Boston Harbor Road intersection; incident management improvements under design or implementation; and efforts to minimize potential impacts to the Beane Farm property located on Woodbury Avenue. With respect to the Beane Farm property, Peggy Lamson, Conservation Commission chair and Planning Board member, expressed concern over the potential impact to one or both trees that abut Woodbury Avenue on the Beane Farm property. Frank responded that the proposed cross section on Woodbury Avenue has been reduced to the extent practicable in an effort to minimize impacts to the Beane Farm and the Isaac Dow House. While impacts to both structures have been avoided, one or both trees abutting Woodbury Avenue on the Beane Farm property may be impacted.

With respect to rail, Frank stated that there was support for expanding the Downeaster service during the peak commuting periods, and that the idea of creating new passenger service between Rochester and Portsmouth, running parallel to the Turnpike, was impractical due to low ridership estimates, high capital cost, and lack of right-of-way. Lastly, Frank took note of a number of miscellaneous items, including the Turnpike profile under various alternatives, the impacts of reconstructed bridge piers on channel currents, maintenance of traffic during construction, base mapping updates and representation of Newington's input to the planning process.

Frank then proceeded to describe the recent modifications to the Newington Alternatives 10A, 12A and 13. He began by noting several issues pertinent to the Newington alternatives which were raised during the recent public informational meetings: desire for a direct southbound off-ramp connection from the Turnpike to Nimble Hill Road, better access to the Exxon-Mobil convenience store, simpler local connections and less length of new local roadway connections. He then described the modifications to Alternatives 10A and 12A which include a direct off-ramp connection from the Turnpike to Nimble Hill Road, and the relocation of the Exit 3 (Woodbury Avenue)/Nimble Hill Road connector from an alignment paralleling the Pease Spur railroad to an alignment paralleling the Turnpike along the to be abandoned existing southbound barrel of the Turnpike. Access to the Exxon-Mobile station would be via the connector road. Frank reviewed site access routing from the Turnpike via Nimble Hill Road and the connector road, and from Newington village via Nimble Hill Road and the connector road. He also reviewed the Turnpike profiles extending from Exit 1 at Gosling Road north to the Little Bay bridges under both modified Alternatives 10A and 12A,

comparing the existing Turnpike elevation above Gosling Road to the proposed Turnpike elevation needed to clear the industrial connector road and the railroad right-of-way.

Frank next described Alternative 13 which was developed and proposed by Town of Newington officials. The concept entails both on and off-ramps to the Turnpike from Nimble Hill Road, a reconfigured Exit 3 interchange that maintains the Tradeport connection, eliminates the local connector between Nimble Hill Road and Exit 3/Woodbury Avenue [This connection would be provided via the Nimble Hill Road – River Road connection, currently under construction, and include connecting to Woodbury Avenue via Shattuck Way and Piscataqua Drive.], and provides for the future railroad R.O.W. connection to the Tradeport by carrying the railroad spur track over the Turnpike. This would allow the profile of the Turnpike to remain at its approximate existing elevation and avoid the need to elevate the Turnpike as in Alternatives 10A and 12A. Access to the Exxon-Mobil facility would be from a cul-de-sac forming the fourth leg of the intersection of Nimble Hill Road, the southbound ramps, and Shattuck Way extension. Frank noted that the original concept developed by the Town included an industrial traffic connector paralleling Patterson Lane, to provide a direct connection between Shattuck Way and Woodbury Avenue. The connector was envisioned to form the fifth leg of the at-grade signalized intersection of Woodbury Avenue and the northbound ramps. However, Frank explained that operation of such an at-grade intersection would require a 7-lane cross section on Woodbury Avenue and adversely impact the Isaac Dow House and Beane Farm. As such, the at-grade industrial connector was deemed infeasible and eliminated from the concept. Frank also noted that the Nimble Hill Road southbound off and on-ramps to the Turnpike were originally located just to the south of the Exxon-Mobil facility. VHB has proposed a modification that would locate these ramps to the north of the Exxon-Mobil facility in close proximity to the existing Nimble Hill Road. Such a modification would retain the same level of access to the Exxon-Mobil facility as originally proposed by the Town's concept, but could have less impact on abutting property, increase the distance between Exits 3 and 4 which would improve traffic operations, and would offer future flexibility to access potential future development of the former drive-in site. He concluded by reviewing the profiles of the Turnpike and the Pease Spur track.

Denis Hebert, Newington Planning Board, stated that Alternative 13 had several advantages in comparison to the modified Alternatives 10A and 12A – Alternative 13 has less local roadway construction, the elevation of the Turnpike was lower, and it was less costly (by approximately \$2 - \$3M). He inquired as to the ownership of the railroad ROW, and responsibility for future maintenance. Chris Waszczuk responded that the railroad ROW is owned by the PDA, and that the NHDOT is researching access and ROW related issues. Chris added that preserving the future railroad ROW is consistent with the updated Pease Surface Transportation Master Plan and Development Plan, and the NHDOT is open to planning for the future rail connection to the Tradeport either above or below the Turnpike. Denis responded that the cost difference between running the rail ROW over the Turnpike or under the Turnpike is relatively small (\$2 - \$3M) given the total cost of the Newington-Dover project; he stated that the major issue is use – will the rail service ever be reactivated? He questioned the risk of raising the Turnpike [and providing the rail connection under the Turnpike] and fracturing the Town for a railroad connection that may never be used. As such, he stated his preference for keeping the Turnpike at-grade, reducing the cost of the project, and for the State, the PDA and others to provide the rail connection above the Turnpike at a future time.

Jack Pare, 188 Little Bay Road, Newington, noting the planning horizon of 2025 for the project, asked if there was any sense of a rail use need prior to 2025. Maria Stowell, PDA, responded that a recent proposal by an airplane manufacturer would have required rail access. Rail service could be required during the next 10 or 20 years. She added that an active rail connection would remove trucks from the Turnpike and be consistent with the Pease Development Plan which has been approved by the Legislature. Maria noted that the rail corridor should be preserved, that easements have been conveyed to the PDA, and that any proposal to alter those easements, or relinquish the ROW would

rest with the PDA Board of Directors. She also added that since Pease's Development Plan was approved by the Legislature, legislative action may be necessary. Jack Pare then suggested that, the rail ROW connection should be preserved, in his view, by planning for the rail to go over the Turnpike.

A resident asked if the future rail corridor would be built as part of the Newington-Dover project. Chris Waszczuk responded that it would not be constructed as part of the project. He noted that the original concepts (Alternatives 10A and 12A) provided a bridge carrying Turnpike traffic over the railroad ROW, and that the recently developed concept (Alternative 13) eliminates the industrial traffic connector and provides for a future railroad bridge over the Turnpike for a railroad ROW. Rick Stern, 1223 Spaulding Turnpike, Newington, inquired as to the origin and destination of the future rail connection. Maria Stowell responded that the rail connection would run from the Portsmouth Yard, north on the Newington Branch, and then traverse westerly across the Spaulding Turnpike to connect with the Tradeport. Chris Cross added that the Portsmouth Branch Line that runs easterly through Greenland, and traverses NH 33 and connects to the Portsmouth Yard from the south does not have easements in place to access the Tradeport, as compared to the Pease Spur, which has a perpetual easement to cross the Turnpike. Tom Fargo suggested consideration of focusing on accessing the Tradeport from the south (vicinity of NH 33) and acquiring the necessary easements. Chris Waszczuk responded that the PDA could independently pursue rail access from the south along the NH 33 corridor, but the focus of the Newington-Dover project should be on the Spaulding Turnpike within the study area, which entails dealing with the railroad easements across the Turnpike. Gail Pare, 188 Little Bay Road, Newington, expressed support for Alternative 13 and the railroad ROW traversing above the Turnpike. She said that it made more sense to her to keep the Turnpike at-grade and to plan for and deal with the railroad ROW in the future. She asked if the PDA would entertain the concept of connecting the rail ROW above the Turnpike as proposed in Alternative 13. Maria Stowell replied that the PDA Board of Directors would need to respond to that plan (Alternative 13). Tom Fargo concluded comments on the rail ROW related issues by stating that the easements and access issues would likely require additional research and legal interpretation and opinion.

At this point Frank turned to Tom Wholley, an acoustical engineer at VHB, to discuss the preliminary noise analysis. Tom explained that the noise analysis was a work in progress and that preliminary analyses of both existing and future conditions have been conducted adhering to NHDOT procedures which are consistent with FHWA procedures. Existing conditions were modeled and calibrated by utilizing an FHWA model that reflects local topographic, traffic and roadway features and conditions. The hour with the highest level of noise was analyzed, and future conditions reflected the peak hour 2025 traffic volume estimates. Tom made note of two (2) criteria for identifying noise abatement requirements – a significant increase in noise, defined as 15 dBA or greater, or a 67 dBA level of noise for residential areas. Tom referred to several graphics which depicted noise impact areas within the study area. He identified three (3) areas in Newington and five (5) areas in Dover where existing sound levels equal or exceed the 67 dBA noise criteria threshold. Construction of the Turnpike improvements – assuming 8-lanes under Alternatives 10A (Newington) and 3 (Dover) – result in noise levels in the aforementioned areas that would increase, at projected 2025 traffic volume levels, in the range of 1 to 4 dBA, depending on location. Tom explained that the project related impacts are considerably less than the NHDOT 15dBA threshold for identifying a substantial noise increase, and that no new areas are created where sound levels exceed the noise abatement criteria. He then referred to graphics which depicted 60dBA and 66dBA noise contours within the study area, and noted locations where potential noise abatement may be considered. These locations are existing areas that exceed 66dBA noise levels, and where existing noise levels would increase by approximately 1 to 4 dBA under future conditions. He noted that design of potential noise abatement in these areas would be assessed and would consider such factors as location, land use, and cost.

Gordon Smith, 14 Boston Harbor Road, Dover stated that the acceleration of trucks from a stop at the Boston Harbor Road/US 4 signalized intersection was very noisy and annoying. He mentioned that he had previously complained to NHDOT about noise following the completion of the Scammell Bridge reconstruction project. Chris Waszczuk offered to conduct a noise measurement at his residence to verify calibration of the noise model and accuracy of noise levels. Tom Wholley added that the model can be adjusted to reflect the affects of gear shifting due to the starting and stopping of trucks. In response to a question from a resident, Tom stated that the NHDOT noise abatement guidance allows a degree of discretion with respect to methods of noise abatement. Denis Hebert asked if a decrease in noise of 10dBA actually constituted a 50 percent reduction in noise level. Tom confirmed that it did, noting the logarithmic function of noise measurements. Denis also asked for confirmation that the future condition analysis assumed an elevated profile of the Turnpike. Tom confirmed that an elevated profile was assumed. Tom Fargo inquired about the noise reduction effects of "quite pavement". Tom Wholley responded that the FHWA model allows a "quiet pavement" assessment, but noted that over time, the pavement wears and the noise level would increase. Pavement reconstruction with "quiet" materials could help abate noise in the short term. Tom Fargo noted that the Massachusetts Highway Department was currently utilizing "quiet pavement" on the reconstruction of I-95 from the NH state line south. Tom Wholley noted that the current preliminary analysis of future conditions does not reflect the benefit of "quiet pavement", thus is a conservative assessment.

Gail Pare questioned whether or not the village center area of Newington should be held to a higher noise standard than residential. Tom responded that in such a case, the 15dBA increase in noise level would be the appropriate criteria, and that noise increases are expected to be in the 1 to 4 dBA range. Barbara McDonald, 415 Newington Road, Newington inquired as to the specific noise abatement mitigation that was being proposed. Chris Waszczuk responded that a preferred alternative needs to be selected prior to the design and location of specific noise abatement measures, and that selection of a preferred alternative was approximately 3-6 months away. Barbara expressed frustration, stating that it appeared to her that there was nothing new in information that was being presented during this evening's meeting. To the contrary, Chris replied that Alternatives 10A and 12A had been modified based on recent feedback from the ATF and public, and that Alternative 13 was a totally new concept originating from Newington Town officials and being presented for the first time at tonight's ATF meeting.

At this point, Frank O'Callaghan directed attention to a plan of Alternative 13 posted on a wall, and discussed the travel patterns and traffic operational characteristics of this concept, including access and egress from the Exxon-Mobil facility. Discussion ensued on the access to the Exxon-Mobil facility. Frank pointed out that site access, as proposed, attempts to strike a balance between traffic operational and safety concerns, and convenience to facility patrons. He noted that NHDOT and FHWA would not support perpetuating direct access to the site from the Nimble Hill Road on and off-ramps due to safety concerns.

Michael Marconi, 19 Coleman Drive, Newington, voiced support for Alternative 13. Peggy Lamson identified roadway drainage as an important design issue. Chris Waszczuk concurred and noted that water quality is a major study area concern. Gordon Smith noted a drainage concern located at the Boston Harbor Road/US 4 intersection. Chris Waszczuk responded that Best Management Practices for drainage would be reflected in final design of the preferred alternative.

At this point, Chris Cross solicited input from Newington town officials and residents in the formulation of a Newington position on project alternatives and issues. Gail Pare noted she assumed NHDOT would be responsible for maintenance (e.g. snow plowing) of the Nimble Hill Road ramps running between the Turnpike and the proposed 4-way intersection of the ramps/Shattuck Way extension/Nimble Hill Road/proposed cul-de-sac (Alternative 13); and that once a preferred

alternative is selected, the edges of the widened Turnpike should be landscaped with mature trees as opposed to seedlings. John Grohl, 272 Nimble Hill Road, Newington, reflected on the discussion of traffic operations and safety concerns relative to Nimble Hill Road under Alternative 13 and concurred with the project team that direct access from Nimble Hill Road to the Exxon-Mobil facility could be problematic in the future. Chris Waszczuk noted the need to begin finalizing the concepts based on the traffic projections and analysis conducted. Lorraine Cole, Coleman Drive, Newington, expressed concern for the potential economic impact to the owner of the Exxon-Mobil facility under the site access proposed as part of Alternative 13. Chris Waszczuk responded that site access, as proposed, is both visible and convenient to both Turnpike traffic and Newington residents, noting the change in access relates to safety concerns for both Newington residents and travelers on the Turnpike. Denis Hebert stated that safety is the priority vis-à-vis impacts on Nimble Hill Road, and that Alternative 13 is the best plan possible. Ann Stewart, Newington Selectman, concurred with Denis Hebert, noting that Alternative 13 best addresses the Town's concerns of safety, noise and access to the Turnpike from Nimble Hill Road. Sandy Hislop, Newington Planning Board, also expressed support for Alternative 13, noting that the lack of a direct industrial traffic connector to Exit 3 would be compensated by the Town's project to extend Shattuck Way to Gosling Road. Michael Marconi stated that Alternative 13 was a big improvement in comparison to other alternatives.

Assuming Alternative 13, Denis Hebert suggested a re-examination of the Turnpike profile in hopes of lowering it in the vicinity of Exit 3. Jack Pare concurred and suggested lowering the Turnpike profile to the extent possible to reduce the extent of the future rail elevation. Michael Marconi inquired if lowering the Turnpike profile would benefit noise abatement. Tom Wholley responded in the affirmative. Denis Hebert suggested that blinders attached to the bridge rails of the Little Bay Bridges would minimize driver distraction and increase traffic flow efficiency and safety.

At this point Chris Cross thanked all for attending and for their input, and thanked NHDOT and the project team for listening. Chris Waszczuk suggested that Town officials should submit a letter to the NHDOT affirming the Town's support for Alternative 13 which was expressed at tonight's meeting. He added that Alternatives 10A, 12A and 13 would be advanced through the Phase 3 DEIS process. Jack Pare asked if Alternatives 10A and 12A would be modified to reflect the railroad ROW traversing over the Turnpike. Chris responded that Alternatives 10A and 12A would remain as is, i.e. with the Railroad ROW traversing under the Turnpike. Denis Hebert offered that the noise mitigation resulting from the lowering of the Turnpike's profile under Alternative 13 was a reasonable trade off for the lack of a direct industrial traffic connector to Exit 3. Chris Cross noted that the development and refinement of alternatives has been an incremental process with both the Town and NHDOT willing to compromise where possible. Gail Pare expressed her appreciation for the ATF and NHDOT's willingness to listen and work with the community.

Chris Waszczuk noted that the City of Dover has requested rescheduling of the next ATF meeting from August 31st to August 24th, at Dover City Hall. Chris Cross closed the meeting by stating that Newington officials would submit a letter of consensus, support and rationale for a preferred Newington alternative within the next two weeks.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

cc: J. Brillhart, H. Goodwin, M. Richardson, W. Hauser, W. Oldenburg
F. O'Callaghan (VHB), ATF Committee, Newington Selectboard

NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
JULY 6, 2005

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NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
JULY 6, 2005

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NEWINGTON-DOVER
NH 16 / US 4 / SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS (11238)
ADVISORY TASK FORCE (ATF) MEETING
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
JULY 6, 2005

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NEWINGTON-DOVER
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**Meeting
Notes**

Attendees: Chris Cross, ATF Chair, RPC
Steve Parkinson, Portsmouth
Rick Card, Greater Dover Chamber
of Commerce
Bruce Woodruff, Dover
Leon Kenison, PDA
Tom Fargo, SRPC
Jack Newick, Dover
Sandy Hislop, Newington
Bill O'Donnell, FHWA
Chris Waszczuk, NHDOT
Marc Laurin, NHDOT
Mike Dugas, NHDOT
Tim Roache, SRPC
David Walker, RPC
Jim Hicks, RKG Associates
Pete Walker, VHB
Jake Tinus, VHB
Frank O'Callaghan, VHB

Date/Time: August 24, 2005 / 6:30 PM

Project No.: 5142500

Place: Dover City Hall

Re: Newington-Dover 11238
ATF Meeting No. 14

Notes taken by: Frank O'Callaghan
Jake Tinus

Chris Cross called the meeting to order at 6:38 pm. He welcomed all, introduced the ATF members and described the ATF's role in reviewing the Spaulding Turnpike Improvement Project. Chris then described the status of the project, indicating that this is the 14th ATF meeting to be held. He indicated that information pertaining to the project is available on the website: www.newington-dover.com. Chris then referred to the draft July 6, 2005 ATF meeting minutes and asked the ATF members if they had any notations aside from the spelling of a Newington selectman's name, which was corrected. A motion was made, and seconded, to accept the minutes as amended. Chris then took the opportunity to compliment VHB for their role as consulting engineers on the project. He also complimented Frank O'Callaghan for a job well done on meeting minutes; he stated that Newington officials noted the thoroughness and accuracy of the information contained in the public record.

Chris Waszczuk then shared the contents of a letter dated July 26, 2005 from the Town of Newington and read the letter for the record. The letter indicates that the elevation of the Turnpike is of greatest concern to the Town and Alternative 13, which proposes a depressed Turnpike is preferred over Alternatives 10A and 12A as Alternatives 10A and 12A would elevate the Turnpike and result in substantially more noise impacts to Town residents. The letter also requests that concepts for an

elevated turnpike are rejected. Chris asked that the letter be officially added to the minutes, but expressed concern that Alternative 13 was not specifically noted as the preferred alternative by the Town. He also noted that the preliminary noise studies completed to date do not show a severe noise impact to the Newington residential area with either alternative. He expressed hope, as Phase 3 was nearing completion, that a preferred alternative would be identified, and that the City of Dover officials would provide a clear expression of either their support for a preferred alternative or clear direction for the project.

Bill O'Donnell pointed out that he too thought that the last paragraph of the Town of Newington's letter was not specific enough to demonstrate Newington's support for Alternative 13. Chris Cross agreed that the Town of Newington appeared to have taken a "light approach" to the letter and noted that the Town views Alternative 13 as the most viable configuration. Chris explained that Newington's biggest concern appears to be potential noise from the highway. In his view, Town officials desire the lowest noise level at the least project cost. He stated that he has asked selectmen for clarification and an endorsement of a preferred alternative in Newington. Regarding the letter from Newington, Chris Waszczuk asked if there were any additional questions or comments from the ATF. There being none, Chris reviewed the meeting agenda which includes a discussion of indirect and cumulative impacts, a review of the Dover alternatives, and a summary of impacts to wetlands and potential mitigation for the project.

Jim Hicks, RKG Associates, introduced himself and explained that RKG's role was to provide an assessment of the various social and economic factors that are being considered in the impact analysis *vis-à-vis* the Environmental Impact Statement being prepared for the project. He continued that he was going to explain the preliminary direct, indirect and cumulative socio-economic impacts to the project. He noted that *Direct Impacts* are caused by the proposed action, or project, and occur at the same time and place. *Indirect Impacts* are caused by the project and are later in time or further removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. *Cumulative Impacts* result from incremental impact of the project when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or persons undertake such action. Jim went on to explain the methodology used to analyze social and economic trends of the study area, which includes Strafford county and portions of Rockingham and Carroll counties. As such, the data that he would refer to was adjusted to reflect these geophysical and demographic realities.

Jim reviewed his methodology. Following the identification of the 33-community study area, social and economic trends were evaluated and complemented by utilizing the regional economic and policy model (REMI) to forecast key economic changes. Additional project changes related to 6 and 8-lane bridge/highway widening alternatives were also estimated by utilization of the REMI TranSight model, which links transportation improvements and economic output.

Jim summarized the key social and economic trends occurring in the study area. These trends include substantial growth in housing over the past 20 to 30 years, with a decline in the rate of growth during the 1990's. In Strafford County, population growth exceeded that in Rockingham. Overall, the study area is projected to experience approximately 28% growth between 2000 and 2025. The average number of residential building permits was approximately 1,400 between 1985 and 2002, with approximately 1 permit in 5 involving multi-family dwelling units. Average housing prices were lower in Strafford County than in Rockingham County between 1992 and 2002. Jim also pointed out that employment in the area showed a 27% increase from 1993 to 2001, and that about 74% of workers that live in the study area are employed in the study area. The analysis also shows that Strafford County saw a 20% increase in the number of residents that work outside the county. In

Rockingham County, about 65% of the workers that commute work in Rockingham County, with only 6% traveling to Strafford County for work.

Regarding direct socio-economic impacts from the project, Jim explained that only two or three properties, depending on the combination of project alternatives that are chosen, would be impacted. He also pointed out that the various alternatives result in a reduction in property tax revenue of less than 1% in both Dover and Newington.

With respect to indirect impacts, Jim explained that the evaluation process includes first developing a base model reflecting a "no build" scenario. From this, the socio-economic effects of various build alternatives are developed. Specifically, Jim mentioned that each of the three alternatives in Newington could improve access to the Pease International Tradeport and a 16-acre parcel (the former drive-in theatre site) in Newington. He further stated that minimal impacts are expected to existing businesses other than at the ExxonMobil service station at Nimble Hill Road. However, providing limited or full access to the Turnpike from Nimble Hill Road may minimize this impact. Positive impacts related to increasing connectivity between certain neighborhoods in Newington and Dover was also noted.

Jim then presented a series of tables showing 2005 statistics on population, employment, economic output and disposable income in Strafford and Rockingham counties and projecting (2025) how they would change over time. For example, population growth in Strafford and Rockingham counties is projected to grow by 22,133 (0.9%/year) and 70,653 (1.2%/year), respectively, without improving the Turnpike in Newington and Dover. He also noted that peak travel times between Exits 1 and 6 on the Turnpike would change in the study area over time depending on whether or not the Turnpike is widened to either 6 or 8-lanes. For example, under the No-Build condition, the existing weekday northbound PM peak hour average vehicle travel time between Exits 1 and 6 will increase from approximately 10 minutes (2005) to 20 minutes in 2025. Assuming widening of the Little Bay Bridges and Turnpike, current travel times would be reduced by approximately 3 minutes under the 6-lane build alternative, and by approximately 6 minutes under the 8-lane build alternative.

Jim concluded his discussion of indirect impacts by summarizing the key changes that would occur due to various alternatives by 2025. He stated that if no improvements are undertaken (no build alternative), population would increase by 50,000 persons within the study area, and the number of households would increase by approximately 21,000. Under the 6-lane bridge alternative, Jim explained that by 2025, a relatively small increase in the number of households and population would occur, 450 and 1,350, respectively, with employment increasing by approximately 1,330 persons above the no build condition. Assuming the 8-lane alternative, increases of approximately 600 households, 1,860 in population, and 1,900 in employment above the no-build condition, could be expected.

Regarding cumulative impacts, Jim mentioned additional development at Pease International Tradeport of approximately 1.5 million square feet and the planned Liberty Mutual expansion of an additional 2,000 employees in Dover. Jim pointed out the general trend toward retail decentralization as a result of a growing population. He also pointed out that the New Hampshire Seacoast Wastewater Management Study may recommend the expansion of public sewerage, which could also affect future growth in the study area by permitting denser development.

At this point, Jim paused for questions and comments. Tom Fargo inquired as to the REMI model inputs, specifically asking if the aging of the population was reflected in the socio-economic growth

projections. Jim confirmed that the model reflects the aging of the "baby boomers". Tom followed up with a rhetorical question, suggesting that some people may believe that if the bridges and Turnpike are not widened, there will be little to no growth in the socio-economic study area. To the contrary, Jim replied, an increase of approximately 50,000 in population is expected in the study area by 2025 under the No Build condition. Widening to 6 or 8-lanes will increase study area population above the no build condition by approximately 1,357 (2.7%) and 1,860 (3.7%) people, respectively. 2025 employment increases above the No Build condition range from approximately 1,331 (6-lane widening) to 1,900 (8-lane widening). Jim further noted that the lower cost of housing in Strafford county, in comparison to Rockingham county, is the driving force, and while the rate of growth is higher in Strafford county, the absolute numbers, *vis-à-vis* population, households, and employment are relatively low.

John Scruton, 99 Sixth Street, Dover, expressed concern about the amount of land that has been lost at Hilton Park over time. He asked how much parkland would be impacted by the project. He also asked whether a tunnel could be built to connect the two portions of Hilton Park on either side of the Turnpike. Frank O'Callaghan responded that the current alternatives being considered for the project would not result in any impacts at Hilton Park. He also pointed out that if there were impacts, NHDOT would have to mitigate for those impacts. Frank added that Hilton Park could be connected and he would discuss the connection in a few minutes within the context of describing the Dover alternatives.

Tom Withka asked about current study area travel times and delays. Frank O'Callaghan explained that currently, between Exit 1 and Exit 6, it takes approximately 9 to 10 minutes to travel that distance during weekday evening peak hours. He noted that under the 2025 No Build condition, such travel time would double. Additionally, the peak "hour" would spread to approximately 3.5 hours. Tom Fargo pointed out that these travel times relate to "non-incident" times. Frank concurred adding that with an accident or vehicle breakdown, traffic quickly backs up, increasing traffic congestion throughout the study area.

There being no further questions or comments, Frank O'Callaghan described the two proposed alternatives in Dover – Alternative 2 and Alternative 3. He referred to a conceptual plan of Alternative 2 and noted the common elements of both alternatives: a grade-separated Hilton Park connector, closure of Exit 5, reconfiguration of the Exit 6 NB off-ramp to a signalized diamond interchange, closure of the Boston Harbor Road access ramp to the SB Exit 6 on-ramp, closure of the Cote Drive Turnpike access, conversion of the Turnpike overpass to 2-way traffic flow, and construction of a new NB on-ramp at Exit 6. Frank then described the changes in traffic patterns associated with these infrastructure modifications. He stated that there has been to date a lot of discussion about the proposed signalized diamond-type NB off-ramp, in comparison to the concept of converting the existing single lane loop ramp [that currently accommodates the NB to WB traffic flow to the Scammell Bridge] to a 2-lane loop ramp as would be warranted by future 2025 travel demands. With respect to the proposed signalized diamond-type off-ramp, Frank noted that peak hour traffic operations would be satisfactory and that vehicle queuing back from the signal would be contained on the off-ramp and would not spill back onto the Turnpike. Signal operations at the off-ramp would provide gaps in the Dover Point Road/overpass traffic stream which would make it easier for traffic to exit and enter Dover Point Road located to the east of the off-ramp. In addition, WB traffic turning left from the off-ramp will not be required to stop at the traffic signal located at the US 4/SB on-ramp intersection. In contrast to the signalized diamond-type off-ramp proposal, the alternative of a 2-lane loop ramp (free flow conditions) raises safety and traffic operational concerns, would require a wider and longer structure to overpass the Turnpike thus increasing construction costs by approximately \$2 M, and results in a NB on-ramp location and layout which would be blocked by vehicles queued back from the Dover toll plaza during the weekday PM peak hour. As

such, the project design team remains unconvinced of the merits of the 2-lane loop ramp concept, and recommends the signalized diamond-type NB off-ramp be retained under both Alternatives 2 and 3.

With respect to Alternative 3, Frank noted that a grade-separated connector (under the overpass) would be provided connecting Spur Road with Boston Harbor Road. This would eliminate the need for a traffic signal at the Boston Harbor Road/Spur Road intersection and would provide a local connection (separate from US 4) connecting the residential areas of Spur Road and Boston Harbor Road. (Turns would be restricted to right in/right out). He also identified the two direct impacts of the Dover alternatives (mentioned earlier by Jim Hicks) as K-9 Kaos and Adaptations, both located on Dover Point Road.

A resident asked why the access ramp from Boston Harbor Road to the SB on-ramp is being closed. Frank responded that ramp geometry limits entering traffic from Boston Harbor Road to low speeds. With the 2025 SB on-ramp traffic volume increasing by approximately 60 percent in the weekday AM peak hour, the merging of the low volume, and low speed traffic from Boston Harbor Road with the heavier volume of relatively high speed traffic from US 4 will result in poor traffic operations and a potentially dangerous merge condition. A safer alternative (with minimum inconvenience) is the rerouting of the Dover Point Road and Boston Harbor Road traffic to turn right at the Boston Harbor Road/US 4 intersection and then to turn right again to enter the SB on-ramp.

Frank then reviewed the profile of the Turnpike noting the proposed Hilton Park connector (under the Turnpike) located approximately 1,200' north of the channel. He noted that an alternative location abutting the channel had been considered, but was deemed infeasible due to floodplain and parkland impacts; such an alternative would also result in additional construction costs of approximately \$5.5 M (to extend the Little Bay and General Sullivan Bridges by one span). He also reviewed preliminary engineering studies of elevating the Hilton Park connector over the Turnpike at the proposed connector location (approximately 1,200' north of the channel). Such an alternative would allow the profile of the Turnpike to remain at its existing elevation. He noted that maximizing the grades on the connector road (but no steeper than 8 percent) and providing the minimum vertical clearance (16'-6") required over the Turnpike could not avoid causing additional property impacts along Dover Point Road to meet grade on Dover Point Road. As such, the concept of elevating the connector road was dropped from further consideration.

With respect to the alternative of providing the connector road adjacent to the channel, Bruce Woodruff asked if the analysis considered the option of removing the General Sullivan Bridge (GSB). Such an option might reduce or eliminate potential impacts to the park. Frank responded that removal of the GSB was not reflected in the analyses to date. Bruce added that, based on the discussion of alternatives and review of traffic patterns, he had a better understanding of the future traffic operations of Exit 6.

Jack Newick concurred with the safety concerns associated with recommending the closure of the Boston Harbor Road ramp connection to the Exit 6 SB on-ramp noting that elderly drivers comprise a part of this ramp-to-ramp traffic. He also noted that the proposed connector roadway must accommodate trucks. Bruce Woodruff added that hauling of boats with masts must also be accommodated. Sandy Hislop stated that 14' mast height would be necessary; masts higher than 14' could be lowered or broken down for clearance. As such, the proposed 14'-6" clearance for the connector, as proposed traversing under the Turnpike, will be adequate.

Rick Sirois from Dover Point Road inquired whether all the traffic from Hilton Park would be rerouted to Dover Point Road. He asked if this issue has been studied and wanted to know if noise and dust in the neighborhood would increase during construction. He asked whether a berm could be built to mitigate these concerns. Frank O'Callaghan responded that the rerouting of traffic has been reflected in the analysis of future conditions. Chris Waszczuk stated that noise impacts were being assessed and that conceptual noise mitigation will be addressed at the next ATF meeting and upcoming Public Information Meetings.

Rick Hebert introduced himself as a user of the roads which are going to be improved by the project. He pointed out several examples of other roads in the region where double turning lanes are operational. Rick emphasized that he was opposed to traffic lights. He challenged the design team to develop an alternative that eliminates traffic signals. Frank O'Callaghan responded that he agrees that there are numerous examples of dual turning lanes, but these left turning lanes are controlled by traffic signals. Frank pointed out the NB exiting vehicles traveling west to US 4 might stop at the off-ramp signal, but would never be required to stop at the SB on-ramp signal, and under Alternative 3, would travel free flow from the NB off-ramp to the Scammell Bridge. In reality, there is only one traffic signal for the NB to WB traffic flow.

Ray Bardwell of Spur Road stated that the design team is to be commended for their fine work in designing the highway improvements considering the limited ROW and compactness of the Exit 6 area. That said, he believes that the WB loop ramp could be enhanced by adding a second lane to it. He further believes that trucks will impede the efficiency of double left turns under the proposed diamond configuration. Lastly, he stated his opposition to traffic signals and asked why the Exit 5 on-ramp from Hilton Park couldn't remain. Chris Waszczuk replied that Alternative 3 was developed in part to eliminate excess signalization as discussed above. Regarding a two-lane loop ramp, Chris reiterated NHDOT's concerns with traffic operations and safety. Regarding the closure of Exit 5, Frank O'Callaghan stated that the proximity of the Exit 5 on-ramp to the Exit 6 off-ramp, given the increase in 2025 travel demands, precludes the safe operation of traffic weaving between entering at Exit 5 and exiting at Exit 6. (Additionally, acceptable geometry at Exit 5 simply cannot be provided without substantial impacts to Hilton Park or the Wentworth Terrace neighborhood.)

Bruce Woodruff noted that the problem in the Exit 6 area is that there is not a lot of available land to work with. If the land area were available, a cloverleaf interchange could be built. The loop ramp issue was looked at in Alternative 1, and it resulted in the loss of several residential properties. This was deemed unacceptable by the City. Frank O'Callaghan confirmed that if a two-lane loop were constructed, standards would dictate that the radius of the loop be enlarged thus resulting in additional impacts to residences. He explained that the design approach retains the existing Exit 6 configuration to the extent possible, while improving the roadway capacity and safety and minimizing environmental and property impacts.

Ray Bardwell asked if it were possible to construct an off-ramp to Spur Road in the vicinity of where it used to be located (i.e. immediately west of the Dover Point Road bridge over the Turnpike). Frank O'Callaghan pointed out that this was not possible due to the grade differences, limited space available, and potential impacts. Tom Fargo added that there would be potential impacts to wetlands and public conservation lands north of this location.

Rick Hebert questioned the need for the proposed Exit 6 NB on-ramp. Chris Waszczuk replied that the off-ramp is relatively inexpensive and allows more people to access the highway directly, which would reduce circuitous and unnecessary traffic volumes on the Turnpike and local roadways.